CHURCH
PLANTING
Dag Heward-Mills

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King James Version of the Bible.

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Chapter 1

Church Expansion

Advancement

There are times when one wonders whether the church is reallyadvancing or not. There are many activities in the church and many programmes are being held. But is the kingdom of God really marching forward or is it moving in circles?

Sometimes in a large city you see new churches springing up. Often, these new churches become the talk of the town and it looks as though God is doing something new. Everyone flocks to the church and everyone seems to take a liking to this new thing. A closer look at these new movements, however, often reveals that the new congregations are made up of people who simply migrated from another nearby church.

The kingdom of God is full of carnal Christians who are always looking for something new and exciting. Many pastors get excited because they think their churches are growing and there is a revival. In reality, there is little overall growth in the kingdom of God. People are simply rotating from church to church. The kingdom of God needs to advance in reality.

Years ago, Europeans sent missionaries to Africa and Asia. Through this act of sacrifice, whole nations have been Christianized. People who were previously pagans have been converted to Christ. Let us not deceive ourselves: there are many more people in the world today. There are also many people who do not have an effective church or pastor. There is an even greater need today for real advancement of the church into un-Christianized territories.

When Europeans sent out missionaries two hundred years ago, there were only one billion people in the world. Today, in the year 2004, there are 6.1 billion people in the world. The secular world always complains about the ratio of doctors to the population.

Does anyone complain about the ratio of pastors to the population? How many evangelists are there compared to the millions of people living today?

How to Advance the Kingdom

The kingdom of God will experience a real advancement when we follow Christ's instruction. Jesus' last command was to go into the world and to make disciples!

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:18-20

In this Scripture, Jesus tells all of us to teach people “the Word of God”. There is no way you can teach people unless you regularly gather them together.

What a Church Really Is

A regular gathering of Christians for the purpose of teaching is called “a church”. In other words, our Lord was telling us to go into all the world and gather people together regularly in order to teach them the word. God is in the business of creating gatherings of teachable people. God by His Spirit is raising men who will go into all parts of the world to gather people regularly to teach them His word.

The more gatherings and groups there are, the more the Great Commission is being fulfilled. The more groups that are taught, the more the Great Commission is being fulfilled. These groups are the churches that are being planted by obedient servants of the Lord.

We Love to Impress People

Unfortunately, because most pastors are so concerned about what people think, they cannot effectively fulfil this Great Commission.

We want to have one big impressive gathering for all to see! We want people to think we are great! After all, the more people there are in the congregation, the more important the pastor looks.

In the MULTITUDE OF PEOPLE is the king's honour(approval and endorsement) …

Proverbs 14:28

There is a need to start many gatherings of people in every possible location in order that we fulfil the Great Commission. The vastness of the world and the distribution of people demands that pastors and people move away from the one congregation church to multiple gatherings in different locations. If we are really serious about obeying our Lord, then we have no choice than to obey this.

Leaders must be trained. Pastors must be trained. Workers must be trained. The “superstar” mentality of the church must die. This superstar mentality wants us to have one great pastor whom everybody acknowledges and praises.

We are often deceived into thinking that the pastor with the largest congregation will be the greatest in Heaven. This will not be the case. The pastor who will be greatest in Heaven is the most humble and childlike pastor.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, WHO IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, THE SAME IS GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

Matthew 18:1-4

Jesus made it very clear who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom. No one can tell your humility by the size of your congregation. In fact, pastors with small congregations are likely to be more humble (and therefore greater in Heaven) than pastors

with big congregations.

What we need is more congregations, more churches and more fruit for our Master. Let us plant churches! “A church at every door and in every language” must be the goal of every true servant of God. A gathering at every electric pole or under every tree will make the kingdom go forward.

Let's stop trying to impress people. Let's stop assessing our ministries by the size of our congregations. Let's have the gatherings. Dear church leaders, do not seek for the honour of men but for the honour (approval and endorsement) of God.

How can ye believe, which receive honour (approval and endorsement) one of another, and seek not the honour (approval and endorsement) that cometh from God only?

John 5:44

Is Evangelism the Fulfilling of the Great Commission?

Evangelism and crusades are good, as they are the starting point of these teachings. Evangelists must go forth. But are they really fulfilling the Great Commission? Yes and No! YES, because they have started the process and NO, because without the teaching, which comes by establishing churches, the Great Commission will not be truly fulfilled.

Simply put, THE GREAT COMMISSION IS EVANGELISM FOLLOWED BY PLANTING OF CHURCHES. The churches are the gatherings and these gatherings are then taught the Word.

Plant Churches in Virgin Territories

Above all, churches must be planted where the Lord directs us. Churches must be planted in the cities and in the villages.

I see the need for churches to be planted in virgin territories. Most of us concentrate on areas where things are already working. But I tell you, there are many untouched areas where God has called us to. The passion and the commitment to soul winning and church planting must come back into the church and we must sacrifice our

young men for this.

Pastors must be concerned that Islam is taking over large sections of Africa and the world, as the church looks on unconcerned. Moslems are sacrificial and do not mind going to the furthermost towns and villages of many nations.

Meanwhile the Christians, who have been commanded to go to the uttermost parts of the Earth, are sitting in the nearest and most convenient cities of the world!

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and UNTO THE NEAREST, MOST CONVENIENT AND PROSPEROUS CITIES OF THE WORLD! (Which Bible is this?)

Chapter 2

The Mindset of Church Planters

Let this mind be in you…

Phillippians 2:5

Christ had a way of thinking which made Him do the things He did. "This verse teaches us to think in the same way that Christ thought". This is what "let this mind be in you" means. It is only when your mind works in a particular way that you can accomplish the will of God.

I am writing about how your mind must work if you are to become a church planter. Without this foundation, no one will advance into the very difficult task of church planting.

The following chapters are basically educating you on the importance of the doctrine of church planting. You will be prompted and your ministry will be inspired to engage in the last great apostolic church planting movement.

1. Understand that God is monitoring your works.

Dear friends, your works on earth are being monitored. God is going to require from you an answer concerning what He has put in you. He is going to ask you what you have done with His gifts. God is going to require from you things He has given to you. He will enquire of your works!

It is interesting that in the seven letters written to the seven churches, one phrase was repeated over and over - I know thy works. Which works are these? Whatever these are, it must be important for every church to have these works fully in place. Notice the following verses:

I KNOW THY WORKS, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them, which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast

found them liars:

Revelation 2:2

I KNOW THY WORKS, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 2:9

I KNOW THY WORKS, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Revelation 2:13

I KNOW THY WORKS, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

Revelation 2:19

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I KNOW THY WORKS, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Revelation 3:1

I KNOW THY WORKS: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Revelation 3:8

“God did not say, “I know thy houses and thy cars”. He did not say; “I know thy Mercedes Benz” He said; “I know thy works!” He did not say; “I know thy degrees.” He did not say; “I know thy father and thy mother.” He said, “I know thy works!”

2. Church planting is the key to going all the way with God.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

Mark 8:35

In 1985, I took a decision to go all the way with God. I had just finished a very difficult medical school exam. In my opinion, I just scraped through that exam. As I thought of the effort I had put into the exam, and the extra work I had done, I felt in my heart that it was not worth it at all. Why should I suffer so much for medicine? Why should I give my life for such a cause?

I vowed that from then on, my priority would be the work of God. Initially I thought that God was the number one person in my life. I was a very serious Christian leader but I did not realize that God's work was not my number one priority. From that time on, I determined that I had one purpose and that was to do the work of God! All other things became side issues. This was truly a turning point in my life.

From then on, my number one goal was God and the ministry. The Medical School had taken its rightful place as number two or three in my heart. That was probably the time that I entered into full-time ministry.

It is interesting to note that after taking that decision, I began to excel in the Medical School. I had a distinction and I won prizes! To my amazement, I topped my class. My heart was far away from any medical ambitions, yet I was receiving medical laurels. Isn't it amazing that the things you give up are the same things that God gives back to you?

It takes faith to walk with God. The opposite of what I expected had happened. This is what it is like to walk with God. He that loses his life will gain it! He that preserves his life will lose it. There will never be a time when you will not need faith. We will always have to believe.

From that time until now, I have been fully plugged into the ministry. Shortly after that period, I planted my first church, which I am still pastoring. Since then I have been involved in planting over 400 churches. I once made a covenant with the Lord that I would plant at least one thousand churches in Ghana alone. I always pray that God will give me grace to fulfill this covenant. I am going all the way! I am not holding back anymore. Let His will be done in my life!

In 1989, I qualified as a medical doctor. By April 1990 I had finished my housemanship. All my medical mates were on their way to foreign countries. It was quite clear to me that the Lord was asking me to stay in Ghana. There were just a few people in the church but I decided to stay with it. I knew that I had condemned myself to a life of poverty. I talked to my wife and she agreed. She supported me all the way. I knew I would never have a house or anything like that. I just knew it. However, I said, *"Lord, I love you with all my heart, I will do it. I entrust myself to you."*

Many years have gone by and it's been worth it all. He said, *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added onto you."*

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

Luke 9:24

3. You are expected to accomplish certain works whilst on earth.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS UNTO GOOD WORKS, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8-10

God has good works for you to do. That is why you are alive in the first place. Make no mistake, the only reason why you are still alive, is to accomplish certain good works.

I was once with a certain English man who was giving me a ride in his taxi. I asked him if he believed in God. He said he did not believe in God and wondered if I believed in such things.

I told him that I did believe in God. Then he asked if I believed in Heaven and Hell. I told him, “I certainly do’.

He asked again, "Do you believe that Heaven is a good place?"

I answered, "Heaven is a wonderful place and we are all looking forward to going there one day."

He continued, "Do you think that life in Heaven will be better than life on earth?"

"I'm sure it will be," I responded.

Then he asked a question that I have never forgotten.

He said, "If indeed Heaven is better than this earth, why don't you all just kill yourselves and go to Heaven right away?"

Before I could answer that question, we had arrived at our destination and I had to get down. As I went along, I pondered over the question that this man had asked me. It seemed to make a lot of sense: Why not go to Heaven right now if it is such a great place?

But God’s Word shows us why we must still stay on the Earth - we are here to do good works. We are ordained to do certain good works on this Earth! We cannot leave until we have finished our work on Earth.

One day Kenneth Hagin had an experience in which he died physically. As his spirit ascended out of his body, he heard a voice saying, “go back, go back, you have not finished your work on Earth.” His spirit returned to his body and he lived for many more years, accomplishing the good works that God had called him to do.

Another reason why we do not kill ourselves is because it is a crime to kill yourself. It is against the law and it is against God's will.

4. Wisdom is to be mindful of Heaven and conscious of

approaching eternity.

Once, one of my pastors came to the office to say good-bye to me. He wanted me to pray for him. He was going out as a missionary to a foreign country. As he sat next to me, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I spoke to him under the anointing. I said, “Always think like a dying man and you will be a wise man. Think about your soon arrival in Heaven and you will be wise.” You see, when people are on their deathbeds, they think differently from people who are not thinking of the realities of Heaven and Hell.

I remember talking to my wife. I asked her, “What do you think God will say to me when I arrive in Heaven?” I don't remember the answer she gave me but this is something that bothers me all the time. Is Heaven happy with me? Is God pleased with me? What will Jesus say to me on the day I see him face to face?

Unfortunately, most of us are just thinking about earthly things - money, cars, visas, power, influence and the honour of men. These thinking patterns are not wisdom. If you die without doing His works, you will be a fool on the day of your death.

Don't be deceived; your time on earth is limited. After today, you will have one less day of opportunity. The houses you are building and the things you are acquiring have no real value. Jesus said, **“Do not pile up things on earth.”** Why did He say so? Is Jesus against us having nice things? Certainly not! He was giving us the highest kind of wisdom - to live with eternity in mind and to believe in the resurrection. The more eternity conscious we are, the wiser we will be!

Do a little calculation right now; how many more years will you live on earth after reading this book. Compare this with the many years you will spend in eternity.

My father once told me that the way I spend the first twenty-five years of my life would determine how I would spend the next forty-five years of my life. By the age of twenty-five, I was a medical doctor and a pastor. My first twenty-five years have truly affected the years that have followed.”

However, I have an even higher piece of wisdom for you: “The way you spend your seventy years on Earth will determine how you will spend millions of years in eternity.”

Don't be like the rich young fool who thought that life was only an earthly life. He was planning various things when the Lord said to him, “Thou fool, tonight I require thy soul from thee.” That very night, the Lord called him up to Heaven in spite of his earthly plans. God knows the day He is going to call you to account. Get ready with your works. I know thy works!

5. You were created to be more than a good person in the society.

We were not created so that we would just be “good” people. We were created to do certain good works. These good works were ordained by God and not by you. In other words, God has already determined the works that you are supposed to do. No one can do anything to impress God. Your goodness, your morality, your uprightness and your perfection will not impress God. To please God is to do what He says you should do.

After eating of the Tree of Good and Evil, men have become obsessed with what they see as “good or evil'. Obeying God is what is right for us to do. Doing good things, moral things and upright things are not necessarily pleasing to God.

When Satan approached Jesus in the wilderness, he suggested some “good things” for Jesus to do. Jesus was asked to use God's power to turn stones into bread but He did not.

He was also asked to protect Himself with God's power but He did not. These are all “good things” but Jesus did not do them. He knew that the right thing to do was to obey God.

The devil also asks people to do “good things” but there is always a hidden agenda. As soon as you step out of God's commands you are in sin even though you may be involved in a “good thing”.

Anomia

Let me help you with a definition of sin. Sin is not necessarily doing something evil. It may surprise you to know that doing a good thing, which is not God's will, is sin. As I said earlier, there were many good things that Jesus simply would not do.

Jesus could have gone on living longer but He accepted His father's will to die on the cross at the age of thirty-three. Would it not have been a good thing for Jesus to have travelled all over the world preaching until He was eighty years old? There are many sick people that Jesus did not heal. Why didn't Jesus heal them? Was it not a good thing to heal the sick?

At this point, we need to understand the essential definition of sin. SIN IS THE REJECTION OF GOD'S WILL. SIN IS THE REFUSAL TO ACCEPT GOD'S PLAN AND GOD'S WILL. It is the substitution of your plans for God's plans. Sin is the substitution of your wisdom for God's wisdom!

That is what “anomia” means. “anomia” is a Greek word. “Anomia” means to reject the law, the will and the way of God. How sad it is that we often think we know better than God.

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

1 John 3:4

From this Scripture, we see that transgression of the law is sin. The word “transgression” is translated from the Greek word “anomia”. This means “one who acts contrary to the law.”

Vine's dictionary declares that this verse gives the real meaning of sin. Vine goes on to say, “This definition of sin sets forth its essential character as the rejection of the law, or will, of God and the substitution of the will of self”.

Years ago, I remember telling God about my plans to serve Him. I decided that I would go into the secular world to earn a lot of money to support the work of God. I told God that I would be a high-income earner who would contribute thousands of dollars to the kingdom.

I am not the only one who has had this idea. I have met countless people who have expressed similar ambitions. It is amazing that very few, if any at all of these people actually do bring a lot of money to the kingdom. I am a full-time pastor so I know what people do. Most of the rich people I know do not contribute much to the kingdom. In fact, you virtually have to plead with them to cough up a few of their gold coins.

Can I be honest with you? I think that, if I had gone on that route (which would have been my way instead of God's way) I would have given very little money to the kingdom. I think I would have probably criticized pastors and churches for the way they use money. Mercy Lord!

You see, God knows more than we do and when God called me to full time ministry He knew what He was doing. I remember clearly at the end of 1990 the Lord asked me to stop every other activity and be a full-time ministry worker. My way would have been to give God some money to keep Him quiet. Forgive!

I didn't know about my future ministry. I would have forsaken the ministry and the rewards He had called me to.

The Value of the Thumb

I once met a man whose thumb had been cut off in a factory accident. He showed it to some friends as I looked on with interest. He related what happened and told us how much compensation he was paid for his thumb.

With mixed feelings he stated that he had been paid eight thousand pounds sterling for his thumb. At that time, I had only one pound in my account and I thought to myself, “What a lucky man.”

Years later, the Lord reminded me of this man's thumb and asked me to do a calculation:

“If this man was paid eight thousand pounds for just his thumb, how much would two thumbs cost?”

I said; “Sixteen thousand pounds”

Then he asked me; "How much would five fingers cost?"

I said; "Lord about forty thousand pounds"

He continued; "How much would ten fingers cost?"

I answered; "Eighty thousand pounds."

Then the Lord asked me; "How much would an arm cost?"

I answered; "A lot of money"

"What about a leg, a kidney, a heart and a brain?"

"I am not sure"

Finally he asked me; "How much would your whole body cost"

I said, "Millions."

The Lord showed me that no matter how much money I contributed to the kingdom, it would never be up to the value of giving my whole body, spirit and soul to His work. In my limited understanding, I thought that giving a lot of money to God was just as good as giving my whole self to Him.

6. The reason for your salvation is the good works.

We often only preach about money and we teach people how to be successful. However, our salvation was and is for a purpose. The Bible says we were saved by grace through faith and that it is not of ourselves but it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8). We are his workmanship created for good works which God has before ordained that we (Christians) should walk in them"(Ephesians 2:10).

This is why we are still alive. There are good works for us to do! One of these good works is the planting of churches. We need to go to the villages and to the towns to preach. God wants people who will go with His message. God is looking for church planters.

These good works are the reason why God gave us a new life in

Him. It is so that we would live for Him and do His purposes. Your works are very important to God. This is the reason for our salvation. “I know thy works!”

7. Doing the work helps you overcome your personal problems.

When people preach and teach it does not mean that they do not have problems. As we minister the Word of God, these problems become smaller.

Instead of us focusing on our difficulties, we must lift up our eyes unto the Lord of the harvest and look at what lies before us. Let us stretch out and reach the un-churched people of our day.

God has never used perfect people who have no problems. Noah had a drinking problem but God used him. Abraham had serious marital problems, but God used him. Rahab, the harlot had moral problems but God used her. The fact that God will use you does not mean that you have no problems of your own!

We have “this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Corinthians 4:7). God's glory and anointing is not in heavenly or angelic vessels, but in earthly vessels. I have always ministered in spite of my personal problems. There are times I have had financial problems, but I did the work of God. There are times I had marital problems, but I did the work of God. There are times I have been sick, and had to be operated upon by surgeons but I still did the work of God.

People look at me and assume that I have never had any problems. Perhaps I even have more problems than the average person. But doing the work of God makes it seem as if I have no problems.

But we have THIS TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

2 Corinthians 4:7

Every earthen vessel that the Lord uses is plagued with personal problems. He ministers in spite of these and not because his life is perfect. The good news is that as you focus on the work of God, your personal problems diminish and the excellency of the power of

God becomes manifest.

8. The strength of a church is measured by its sending capacity.

The strength of a church is traditionally measured by its seating capacity. The more people the church seats, the greater it is perceived to be. However, the church was born as a sending church. Is your church sending people out? Pastors like to boast about who comes to their churches. They drop names and say "The Minister of the Sun, Moon and Stars comes to my first service. The Deputy Minister for Financial Corruption is on my finance committee." Rarely do pastors speak of the people they have sent forth as missionaries. Notice how the New Testament churches operated.

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, THE HOLY GHOST SAID, SEPARATE ME BARNABAS AND SAUL FOR THE WORK WHEREUNTO I HAVE CALLED THEM.

So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

Acts 13:1, 2, 4

9. Doing the works causes you to overcome the zilch of life.

Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 2:17-20

One of the words Solomon used many times was the word vanity. Solomon discovered after acquiring everything that everything was vanity. God gave him things many human beings could only ever imagine. King Solomon discovered that each and everything was worthless and empty. He said, “Vanity of vanities all is vanity.”

Everything is useless. Everything is useless in the context that Solomon was writing; which was the context of “under the sun”. “Under the sun” is a commonly used phrase in the book of Ecclesiastes. Under the sun refers to our earthly existence under the influence of the physical sun - zilch.

The earthly existence that we have is useless. That is the reality. Pastors are supposed to teach and preach the truth. We need to be oriented toward Heaven and oriented toward the day of our judgment. A church planter is someone who operates by this wisdom. Planting of churches is not vanity because it will bring us an eternal reward.

10. Your works will follow you into Heaven.

When you die, nothing goes with you. I have conducted many funerals. I have stood over the coffins of people that I have known and loved on this Earth. I have buried people and put them into the ground. I have seen it repeatedly. No one takes anything out of this world. Cars remain behind, houses remain behind and money remains behind.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM.

Revelation 14:13

Nothing except your works will follow you when you leave this

world. You have to get involved with the work of God. You must plant a church in your lifetime. You have to get involved in your church.

God only gives you an opportunity to be involved in His work. God does not need you. He does not need me. He does not even need pastors. If pastors were so important, they would not die. Nobody is of any relevance and significance to God. God's mercy allows us to be involved in His work. Our inclusion in the work is God's mercy towards us!

11. You will void becoming critical by planting churches.

It is better to participate than to be an observer. Observers often become critical of everything. After being idle for some time, you begin to see all the faults in your church. You will notice the pastor's mistakes when he preaches. You will notice his mistakes when he quotes Scriptures. You will notice when the anointing is not as strong as it usually is. Before long, you will be familiar with all the shortcomings of your church. You will eventually fall into criticism and become faultfinding. Demons will find in you a haven.

12. Plant a church because there is a time when God expects you to be a teacher.

There comes a time when you should be a teacher of the Word of God. You should teach people, you should give something.

FOR WHEN FOR THE TIME YE OUGHT TO BE TEACHERS, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Hebrews 5:12

There is a time when you must become a teacher. If you do not become a teacher when you are supposed to, there is something wrong with your spiritual development.

One day we went preaching and there was a young woman in the

group who I asked to preach at an open-air dawn broadcast. She said: “I don't know how to preach. I have never preached before, I don't know enough of the Bible.”

Then I told her, “You can preach.” I told her to repeat everything I said to her. Before long, she was preaching. She preached a whole sermon that morning. She is still serving the Lord today. You will be surprised at what you can do if you only try.

Chapter 3

The Works of Church Planters

Let this mind be in you…

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus UNTO GOOD WORKS, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8-10

The Bible makes it clear that our works do not save us. We are not going to Heaven because of our good works. Neither are we saved from Hell because of our good works. We are saved by grace. Our salvation is from the Lord. You cannot do anything to earn salvation. You cannot be good enough to qualify for Heaven! Our best is not good enough. Works cannot and will never qualify us for heaven.

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Romans 3:10

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Isaiah 64:6

Notice however that the portion of Ephesians that talks about "salvation not by works" is the same that talks about our being "created for good works." This means that after we are saved, we get into the good works that Christ has prepared for us.

Many Christians relax because they know that they are saved by grace and not by works. They feel that they are already destined to go to Heaven. All we have to do is sit back, relax and enjoy the ride

to Heaven. Thank God for the ride to Heaven. But upon arrival, questions are going to be asked!

"Did you do the things I asked you to do? Did you do the good works that I ordained for you?" Jesus will ask.

The Two Judgments

God is not going to judge us the way He will judge the rest of the world. He has prepared an extra judgment for believers. The Bible talks about two different thrones of judgment. The White Throne will be the place of judgment for the world. Christians will be judged at a different seat called the Judgment Seat of Christ.

The White Throne is the supreme court of Heaven. This is where the decision to admit you to Heaven or not will be taken. But there is another judgment seat for believers.

1. The White Throne

And I saw A GREAT WHITE THRONE, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; AND THE BOOKS WERE OPENED: AND ANOTHER BOOK WAS OPENED, WHICH IS THE BOOK OF LIFE: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

Revelation 20:11-13

The Book of Life and the Book of Works

It is essential that your name be in the all-important book of life. This determines whether you will enter into Heaven at all.

But the Scripture shows us that there are books that also have the

records of all the works we do. This is the book of works! This book will be opened. It contains records of our works. It will show the records of churches that have been planted. The dead will be judged out of these books according to their works.

2. The Judgment Seat of Christ

Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

Mountains of Foolishness

Believers are going to receive judgment for what they do in their bodies. We must work the works of Jesus. The things we treasure are going to lose value in the moment of death. Everything that has been gathered and accumulated will become a mountain of foolishness.

Our accumulated wealth, houses, degrees, clothes and shoes, will stand as testimonies to our faithlessness. We never believed in the resurrection! We never believed that we would resurrect and live again in eternity. Our accumulated perishables will witness against us in that day. They will speak to Heaven and declare “he was faithless. He did not obey you. He did not believe; his heart was on the treasures of this world!”

Baskets of Fruits

One day you will wake up and find that you are in Heaven. On that day, what will you have in your hand? Baskets of fruits for the glory of God, or mountains of foolishness that testify against you? Dear friend only one thing follows you to Heaven - your good works.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and

THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM.

Revelation 14:13

Many years ago in 1982, I was in medical school. I remember going for my first Anatomy lecture. There was so much to write. We wrote down a lot of notes. As the professor continued lecturing, I began to wonder whether I was expected to write everything. I asked myself, “Are all these things important?”

The lecturer continued his extensive and detailed lecture on the Introduction to Anatomy. He taught us different anatomical terms like “pronation, supination, external rotation, internal rotation,” etc. My notes that day almost filled my notebook.

During the class, I asked a friend, “Caroline, do you think we are in the right place?”

She said, “No, I don't think so.” She told me she was thinking of leaving the school and I said I was also thinking of quitting. We could not imagine seven years of this torture. I thought seven years would never come to an end. We could not wait for seven years: it was too long! But gradually the years came to pass and we finished school. The seven years I thought would never come, have come and gone. Now it's been twenty-two years since I went to medical school. It's twenty-two years since I asked that question.

The point I am trying to make is that eternity, which seems so far, will soon be on us. I thought seven years would never come by. Some of us think eternity will never arrive. We do not believe in the phase two of our lives. We do not believe in phase two of our lives. Our time on earth is short and very soon we will all be in Heaven. We will wonder why we thought we would live on earth forever!

Chapter 4

Church Planting and the Jerusalem Church

There were two churches worth taking note of in the New Testament, the Jerusalem Church and the Antioch Church.

Ten Things Everyone Should Know about the Jerusalem Church

1. The Jerusalem Church was the first church.

2. The important people were based in the Jerusalem Church. Even the apostles were based in this church.

3. They were the church that had first hand instructions from Jesus to go into the entire world.

4. They were a very prosperous and flourishing church.

Neither was there ANY AMONG THEM THAT LACKED: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Acts 4:34-35

5. There was great growth in the church.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were ADDED UNTO THEM ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS.

Acts 2:41

6. There was great unity in the church.

And all that believed WERE TOGETHER, and had all things common;

Acts 2:44

7. God gave them victory over every problem and difficulty they encountered. For example, Peter and John were released from the custody of the chief priest and elders. They miraculously escaped from jail by angelic intervention.

Then the high priest rose up, and… laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth…

Acts 5:17-19

8. The power of God was greatly manifested in the church. In the book of Acts, people who lied to the pastors died instantly.

But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost… Ananias hearing these words FELL DOWN, AND GAVE UP THE GHOST: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

Acts 5:3, 5

9. Unlike many churches today, they cared for the poor.

…and distribution was made unto EVERY MAN ACCORDING AS HE HAD NEED.

Acts 4:35

10. But they did not obey the instruction of church planting until catastrophe struck.

…at that time there was a GREAT PERSECUTION against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all SCATTERED ABROAD throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 8:1

Perhaps all their good characteristics clouded out the reality that

they were a disobedient church. When one of the most promising young pastors, probably tipped to be Peter's successor, died suddenly, they sat up.

What a blow this must have been to the Jerusalem church! Everything was going perfectly until this happened. Every problem had so far worked together for good. Somehow every challenge had been overcome by the power of God - until this one. Suddenly they had a dead pastor on their hands.

And they stoned Stephen calling upon God…

Acts 7:59

This marked a turning point in the life of the Jerusalem Church. While the church was reeling under this blow, the secular world stepped up their persecution.

…And at that time, there was A GREAT PERSECUTION against the church that was at Jerusalem …

Acts 8:1

It was this persecution that made the church finally obey God. It is easy to be deceived by peace and apparent success. After all Bible said, "…when they say peace, peace, then sudden destruction will come upon them"… (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

We are not to be led by circumstances or apparent prosperity. These are not indicators of God's blessing. If peace and prosperity were the hallmarks of God's blessing then the Apostle Paul was the greatest sinner because he suffered so much.

Notice how many problems he had in his ministry.

Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

2 Corinthians 11:23-27

Notice Paul's philosophy of life. It is only through tribulation that we will enter the kingdom of God.

...WE MUST THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Acts 14:22

Three Funerals

Years ago, I had a terrible experience in my ministry. Within one year, three of my pastors died mysteriously. The first one died on the evening of Friday, 27 October 2000. I had a call from his wife that her husband was ill and in the clinic. Within an hour I had another call on my mobile phone from one of my doctor pastors.

She said, “Bishop, Pastor Charles is dead.”

I said to her, “Do you understand what you are saying?”

I remember exactly where I was when I got this call. I couldn't believe my ears. He was a perfectly normal person. He had even had lunch in my house the day before.

I drove straight to the clinic and there I saw his wife of only seven months in tears, sitting outside the ward. She was scared and did not even know what had happened. As I walked into the room, I saw for the first time, one of my own sons in the ministry, a promising young man, just 27 years old, lying dead on the bed.

That was one of the most pitiful and saddest nights of my life. As I watched his wife weep over her husband's dead body, I wondered what we had done to deserve this. At his funeral, we encouraged

ourselves in the Lord and tried to reassure his wife. I didn't know that within a year I would be back in the business of burying pastors and comforting their widows.

Two weeks later, I had another call telling me that one of my pastors was very ill. Initially, he was being treated at a private hospital but we moved him to the intensive care unit of a bigger hospital. I remember battling for his life and running around from place to place, trying to get various doctors to attend to him.

I ran around with blood samples trying to save his life. It was all to no avail. Within a few days, he lost consciousness and I eventually had a phone call from the hospital - another Pastor Charles was dead. My heart sunk and depression set in. All strength was gone as I walked home. Another promising young pastor was dead leaving behind a widow with little children.

I thought it was all over, but a few months later, whilst in South Africa ministering, I had a phone call. I had just walked into my hotel room in Pretoria when my Senior Associate Pastor called me from Ghana.

He said, “Pastor Fleischer is dead.”

I stuttered, “What…. How… When…?”

By this time, I knew there was something wrong.

You see, in a sense, we were just like the Jerusalem church. Many of the characteristics of the Jerusalem Church could be found in our church. We were blessed, growing, prosperous, powerful, and as they say “we had it going on.” It was this event that finally brought my attention to God's plan of church planting for my life.

Do not misunderstand me. God had already used me to establish over two hundred churches. We were into church planting but I had become comfortable with what we had already achieved. I was scared of moving into new territories. I was not so willing to send people anywhere. I had changed, I had backslidden, and I did not even know it.

I was a fearful General, afraid to say to one, “Go and he goeth.” I could not bear to send these prosperous pastors and workers to areas that desperately needed churches. My considerations were now different. The “Jerusalem prosperity” had gotten into my head and into my heart. I was thinking of the kind of life people would have in some of these towns and villages. What schools would their children go to? Would these young men ever have enough money to build houses or buy cars?

The Lord asked me, whether those were the considerations I made when I was entering the ministry. The Lord asked me whether our church would be where it is today if considerations of personal well-being and comfort were what had guided us. I knew in my heart that I had backslidden.

Many people think it is hard to be sent. But it is even more challenging to be the one to send people into what may be poverty and death. But I am determined to go all out and not to restrain myself again when it comes to church planting.

I hear the voice of the spirit saying, “Send, send, send.” One time the Lord rebuked me. He said I was training many people but I was not sending them out. He showed me that I needed to balance my training with my sending.

The Jerusalem Church eventually became a church planting ministry but through great difficulty.

And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time THERE WAS A GREAT PERSECUTION against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. Therefore they that WERE SCATTERED ABROAD went every where preaching the word.

Acts 8:1, 4

Chapter 5

Church Planting and the Antioch Church

Now there were in the CHURCH THAT WAS AT ANTIOCH certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

Acts 13:1-4

Seven Things You Should Know about the Church in Antioch

1. The Church in Antioch became the most important church in the New Testament.

Some disciples from Cyprus and Cyrene went to Antioch and started a church there. Initially Antioch was just an offshoot of the ministry in Jerusalem.

Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

Acts 11:19

2. It was in the Antioch Church that believers were first called "Christians".

And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were CALLED CHRISTIANS FIRST IN ANTIOCH.

Acts 11:26

3. The first recorded revival took place in Antioch. Because of this revival, Barnabas was sent to help. The Church in Jerusalem heard of what God was doing in Antioch and was happy to release Barnabas for the Antioch work.

Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch.

Acts 11:22

4. Barnabas decided to get Paul to join.

5. The Apostle Paul made the Antioch Church his home church. He probably felt more at home in The "Antioch Chapel International" than in "Jerusalem Christian Centre".

6. There were many prophets and missionary-minded people in Antioch. The Jerusalem church was not so keen on outreaches and missionary work.

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 13:1

7. The Antioch Church obeyed the voice of the Holy Spirit without delay. They boldly sent out their best apostles as missionaries to plant churches.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, THE HOLY GHOST SAID, SEPARATE ME BARNABAS AND SAUL for the work whereunto I have called them.

Acts 13:2

Paul and Barnabas did not see much power when they were in Antioch. It was when they moved out that they experienced signs

and wonders. The miracles we read about in the book of Acts are the miracles that happened when Paul and Barnabas were out planting churches.

The great difference between the Antioch Church and the Jerusalem Church was in their response to the command of Jesus. The Antioch Church heard exactly the same command to plant churches as the Jerusalem Church did. May we follow the example of the Antioch Church. May we promptly obey the instruction to plant churches. There is no need to wait for persecution and trouble before we get involved in church planting.

Chapter 6

Preaching, Teaching and the Planting of Churches

Preaching, teaching and healing are the key activities that give rise to the formation of churches. Jesus Christ understood that His Father had chosen these little understood methods to establish the church.

Through Jesus' ministry, millions of churches have sprung up virtually everywhere in the world. Truly this is the hand of God and this is God's method of establishing His church.

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Matthew 9:35

The use of much money, administrative techniques, handing out of gifts and building of schools and hospitals has never produced the same results that the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry did.

In the next few chapters, I will be outlining the mysteries of preaching, teaching and healing; the strategy that Jesus Christ Himself used to generate hundreds of thousands of churches in different nations, cultures and languages.

Indeed, a lasting church has been born. Two thousand years is not enough time to quench the power of three years of preaching, teaching and healing.

As you read the following chapters about preaching and teaching, your duty is to allow God to build faith in you. You must believe in this humble and “foolish” method of church formation. The highest kind of delusion is to think that we can do anything better than Christ did. He said, “It is enough that the servant be as his master”.

It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the

servant as his Lord…

Matthew 10:25

I have often wondered what God would do if He became a man. There are so many problems in the world and not enough solutions. In general, we know that God would do good things and solve people's problems. Here are some ideas about what God could do if He appeared on this Earth for a brief period.

9 Suggestions for God

1. Perhaps God would set up several large universities.

2. Perhaps God would build the biggest hospital in the world to cater for many sick people.

3. Perhaps God would provide potable water for thousands of villages.

4. Perhaps God would construct the largest hydroelectric dam to provide electricity.

5. Perhaps God would set up relief centres to cater for the refugees and displaced children of the world.

6. If God became a man, perhaps He would build many orphanages.

7. If God became a man He would probably set up great businesses so that He could finance the work of God.

8. If God became a man, He would build schools to cater for all children of school- going age. This would reduce illiteracy in the world and greatly improve the lot of many people.

9. If God became a man, He would join some political parties in order to gain influence to help the world. Perhaps He would help the world better by being a president.

But God did become a man. God did take on the form of a man for a brief period.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, AND WAS MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN: AND BEING FOUND IN FASHION AS A MAN, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

...Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

How do we know that God became a man? What evidence do we have that God actually became a man? We know for these reasons.

1. If God were to become a man, His entry into this world would be unusual. And sure enough, Jesus was born of a virgin amidst many unusual circumstances.

Behold, a VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Matthew 1:23

Over 109 prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus' coming into this world.

2. If God were to become a man, He would probably speak the greatest words ever spoken. His words would probably never be forgotten. This is exactly what has happened. Even though Jesus never wrote a book, or recorded a tape, His words are still echoing through the centuries.

For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Matthew 7:29

3. If God became a man, He would be sinless and perfect. Sure enough, Jesus was the perfect man. He did no sin.

Who did NO SIN, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1 Peter 2:22

4. If God did become a man He would overcome the problems that have plagued mankind through the centuries. He would conquer sickness and disease. That is exactly what Jesus did. All kinds of diseases and sicknesses were banished from the presence of the Lord.

When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and HEALED ALL THAT WERE SICK:

Matthew 8:16

5. If God became a man, He would control the elements that He created. That is what Jesus did. He exercised power over the wind and the rain. He even walked on the sea that He had created.

And when the disciples saw him WALKING ON THE SEA, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

Matthew 14:26

6. If God became a man for a brief period, His visit to the Earth, no matter how brief, would always be remembered. It would be referred to as the time God visited us. Surely the visit of Christ has never been forgotten. In fact the entry and exit of Christ are marked annually by the whole wide world. Two thousand years after the visit of Christ, Easter and Christmas are still worldwide events.

7. If God became a man, He would overcome man's greatest enemy - Death. The Lord Jesus calmly predicted that He would die and rise up after three days. He seemed to have no fear of death. He conquered death and the grave and Hell for us that we might not have to go there.

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour

JESUS CHRIST, WHO HATH ABOLISHED DEATH, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

2 Timothy 1:10

8. If God became a man we know that He would spend His time doing the maximum good for all mankind.

How God anointed JESUS OF NAZARETH with the Holy Ghost and with power: WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 10:38

The Maximum Good

Dear friend, let us ask ourselves what activities Christ engaged Himself in during His brief stay on earth. Was it the building of schools and hospitals? Was it the building of orphanages and providing of electricity and water? The answer is NO! We can find out what Jesus did by reading the four gospels.

In particular, there is a Scripture that summarizes the activities of Christ on earth. I want you to read it carefully.

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, TEACHING in their synagogues, and PREACHING the gospel of the kingdom, and HEALING every sickness and every disease among the people.

Matthew 9:35

This Scripture shows us that the main activities that God engaged in when on Earth were preaching, teaching and healing. These three activities must have been the most beneficial to the human race. “That is why He engaged himself in them.” More good was done to this world by the preaching, the teaching and the healing of Christ Jesus. If there were anything better or more helpful, He would have done it. This preaching, teaching and healing has given birth to thousands of churches.

WE CAN SAFELY CONCLUDE THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT AND HIGHEST FORM OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO ANY COMMUNITY ON THIS EARTH MUST BE PREACHING, TEACHING AND HEALING. Of course I don't think that any of us would purport to be wiser than God!

I often marvel when people ask me why I have left the medical field for the ministry. I suppose they think that giving out medicine is the highest form of assistance any human being could render to a community.

I agree that the practice of medicine is a very noble and benevolent activity - what would we do without doctors? But Jesus has shown us the highest and the best kind of help you could ever give to mankind.

It is sad that pastors in the ministry are often pressurized to leave their role of preaching, teaching and healing. Subtle psychological pressure is exerted on them until they feel that doing something more secular is more beneficial. The highest form of deception is to think you are wiser than God. The ultimate delusion is to think that you can have a greater impact than Christ did.

It is time to understand that preaching, teaching and healing are what the world needs. The world is waiting for preachers. The world is waiting for teachers. God is raising an army of preachers and teachers who will do His will. By preaching, teaching and healing, the Lord Jesus has brought forth thousands of churches, which have lasted thousands of years.

The church has done more good to this world than the UN, WHO and the UNHCR put together. Definitely the church has done more good to this world than most governments have. All this good is the result of Jesus' preaching, teaching and healing for three and a half years.

I utterly reject the statements of those who say that a church becomes relevant only when it gets involved in social work. The church becomes relevant when it gets involved in preaching teaching and healing. That is what God would have done and that is what we should do. The wisdom of God is foolishness to men. God

has chosen that by the foolishness of preaching, man should be saved.

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God BY THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING TO SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE.

1 Corinthians 1:21

People used to tell me how helpful I would be to the community as a doctor, but I tell you that I am of greater benefit now that I am a preacher. I believe the greatest calling upon anyone is the call to preach. The best way we can help humanity is to preach, to teach and to pray for healing. That is why you must pray for the power to preach, for the grace to become a teacher and for the grace to heal the sick. When God became a man, He gave Himself to preaching.

Chapter 7

Why Preaching Is Powerful

1. Preaching Attacks the Root of Man's Problem

Sin Is the Root of All Our Woes

The world is full of sinners on their way to Hell. No matter how good you are, your sins are manifest to God. Anyone who thinks he is righteous before God is suffering from one of the highest kinds of deception.

The only thing that gives us a right standing before God is the blood of Jesus. Unfortunately some teachings in the body of Christ have led to the deception that we are semi perfect beings who have a right to be in Heaven.

Let me give you a few examples of people I know you respect. You will notice that as they got to know God they became more humble and even uncertain of their standing with God.

The Apostle Paul graduated downward in his opinion of himself. He moved from being the highest of the apostles to the worst of sinners. This is real growth in humility.

i. First, he saw himself as not being inferior to any of the apostles.

… for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles…

2 Corinthians 12:11

ii. He later considered himself as the least of these same apostles.

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1 Corinthians 15:9

iii. After a while, he stopped comparing himself with the apostles

and likened himself to the least of the saints.

Unto me, who am less than THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Ephesians 3:8

iv. Finally, at the end of his life and in one of his last letters, he did not bother to compare himself to an apostle or a saint. He had concluded that he was the chief of sinners.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save SINNERS; OF WHOM I AM CHIEF.

1 Timothy 1:15

Job

Job was described by God as an upright and perfect man who eschewed evil. However when Job came into contact with the Lord he realized that he was actually a very evil person. He said, “I abhor myself.”

I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. WHEREFORE I ABHOR MYSELF, and repent in dust and ashes.

Job 42:2-6

Peter

The Apostle Peter was fishing one day when the Lord showed up. When he realized that the one standing by him was Jesus, he was filled with a sense of sinfulness and he said, "I am a sinful man". The presence of God always reveals our deepest corruption.

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I AM A SINFUL MAN, O Lord.

Luke 5:8

Daniel

Daniel was a holy prophet greatly loved by the Lord. However when he came into the presence of the Lord, he said "my comeliness has turned in me into corruption". Once again you see a holy man of God who realizes his sinfulness when he is in the presence of God.

And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.

Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my "COMELINESS WAS TURNED IN ME INTO CORRUPTION." and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.

And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent.

And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

Daniel 10:7-11

All this goes to prove that there is none righteous, no not one.

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Romans 3:10

It is the presence of this pervading sin that is destroying the whole world. Sin is the reason for all the problems in the world. Sin is the

root cause of all our woes. That is why preaching is the most important remedy for the problems of mankind. Preaching attacks man's problem at its very root.

Sin Leads All Men to their Death

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and SO DEATH PASSED UPON ALL MEN, FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

Romans 5:12-15

Death has passed onto all men because of sin. The sin in our lives leads to death. The Bible also says when sin is finished it brings forth death.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: AND SIN, when it is finished, BRINGETH FORTH DEATH.

James 1:15

Death is the inescapable end for all human beings. The very fact that we die indicates the presence of sin. Every time you see someone dying, remember that sin has completed its work. Death is the only natural consequence of sin.

Sin Is Behind All the Causes of Death

The presence of sin opens the door to all the known causes of death including the cancers, HIV, incurable diseases, sickness, accidents and old age. The diseases of this world can all be attributed to our sinfulness.

As you will notice, none of the human attempts at helping mankind

have eradicated the presence of sin and death. So preaching is the only solution that offers life to a human race sentenced to death.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 1:4

No hospital can promise you life. No medical cure can offer you life. The UN cannot solve your problem of death. There is a death sentence on all of us and only Jesus can give us new life. Jesus said, "I came that you might have life".

The Death Sentence

I remember watching a documentary of a young man who had been sentenced to death in America. It was a sad and moving true story of this black man who was alleged to have killed a policeman. He denied ever killing the policeman and many people believed that he was truly innocent.

For six long years, legal battles raged, as lawyers, family and friends tried to get him off death row. Finally, his options ran out and there were no further appeals that he could make.

It was an amazing documentary. They filmed this man up until a few minutes before his execution. His family and friends were invited for a last dinner. They all gathered around and had dinner with him.

Finally it was time for them to go and they hugged him one by one till no one was left. He was then escorted to a private room where he had the opportunity to talk to his pastor and then to his lawyer. Within an hour, the execution had been carried out.

After the execution his lawyer and his pastor were interviewed. I remember in particular the question his pastor was asked.

"What was the last thing you said to him?" someone asked.

The pastor answered, "I told him that all of us were under a death sentence, the only difference is that most of us do not know the day of our execution."

As I pondered over those words, I thought to myself how true they were. We are indeed under a death sentence. All of us will have to die whether we like it or not. It is just a matter of time till the sentence will catch up with us. It is only Jesus who can deliver us from this death sentence and give us new life. He said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.”

This is why preaching is so important. This is what differentiates preaching from all other kinds of human assistance. Preaching ministers life to condemned people! Jesus said, “the words I speak onto you are spirit and life.”

2. Preaching Releases the Power of God

For I am not ashamed of THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST: FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:16

HE SENT HIS WORD, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

Psalm 107:20

I once had a visiting preacher from Switzerland who made a remark about my church. He said, “Your church is like a giant youth group”. He continued, “There are so many young people in your church.”

Up until then, I had not really noticed that our church was full of young people. Initially, I thought it was not a compliment for someone to say that my church was full of young people. However, as time went by, I realized that it took the power of God to get young people into church.

You see, young people are full of energy and youthful lusts. There are certain desires that are found more in young people. When the church is full of young people, it is a sign that the power of God is present.

The police cannot change young people. Moral codes cannot restrict wild young men. The fear of going to prison doesn't even seem to inhibit people today. However, I know something that has the power to convert the most hardened sinner. Is it not amazing that people who would not listen to anyone - parents, teachers or advisors are “arrested” by the Word of God and are changed forever? Truly, the preaching of the cross is the power of God.

From a very early age I have served the Lord. I have followed Him with all my heart. What could make a young man like me give up his profession and become a preacher? This is the power of God at work.

Preaching always releases power and that power has the ability to change people. That is why you must be a preacher. This is because preaching has the ability to release power.

3. Preaching Gives Hope

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures MIGHT HAVE HOPE.

Romans 15:4

Many people come to church with hopeless and discouraging situations hanging over their heads. As the “Word of God” comes to them, discouragement and hopelessness are driven away. Like chaff before a strong wind, discouragement and desperation are forced to fly away. The preaching of the Word of hope keeps men alive.

The Mouse Survived because of Hope

I once read about an experiment in which a mouse was put into a deep bucket of water in a dark room. There was absolutely no light in this room. After about three minutes, the mouse drowned in the bucket.

A mouse of similar weight and size was put in the same bucket of water and in the same dark room. This time, a little glimmer of light was allowed to seep through. This second mouse kept

swimming for about three days before it finally drowned. What was the difference between the two mice? The thin ray of light that the second mouse saw gave it so much hope. The hope for survival kept the mouse swimming. This is a wonderful story that illustrates how hope can keep a man alive until his miracle comes.

We hardly talk about hope, but without hope there can be no faith. Faith is the assurance of the things you are hoping for. As people receive hope through preaching, faith is built up.

4. Preaching Saves Lives.

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching TO SAVE THEM that believe.

1 Corinthians 1:21

God has chosen that by the foolishness of preaching, people should be saved. Preaching saves lives.

The Anointing of Jonah

In the last days, the anointing of Jonah the preacher will be released on men. The anointing of Jonah was sufficient to convert hardened sinners to the ways of God. Nineveh was a city of wicked people and Jonah was initially afraid of preaching there. The entire city was eventually converted when Jonah preached. Jonah did not perform any miracles. He did not slay anyone in the Spirit nor did he have strange manifestations of the Spirit. However, he had a strong preaching anointing and it was strong enough to change an entire city.

I see that preaching anointing coming upon your life! You shall preach to thousands! Men's hearts will change when they hear you preaching. People will be saved when they come under your preaching ministry.

The book of Genesis shows us that people lived much longer than they do today.

And all the days of Enoch were THREE HUNDRED SIXTY AND

FIVE YEARS:

Genesis 5:23

And all the days of Methuselah were NINE HUNDRED SIXTY AND NINE YEARS: and he died.

Genesis 5:27

And all the days of Lamech were SEVEN HUNDRED SEVENTY AND SEVEN YEARS: and he died.

Genesis 5:31

As sin increased, life became shorter. The Bible is very specific about how God shortened life from hundreds of years to one hundred and twenty years.

And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be AN HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS.

Genesis 6:3

It seems life was shortened even further from one hundred and twenty years to seventy years.

The days of our years are THREESCORE YEARS AND TEN; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

Psalm 90:10

The earlier generations were having “four hundred year” birthday parties. They had children when they were hundred and fifty years old. Today we are overjoyed if someone gets to the age of eighty. By the time someone is forty, he seems to be an elderly person. Why has the body begun to give up so early?

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, That the sons of

God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

Genesis 6:1-3

900 years was reduced to 120 years because of fornication with the sons of God! Fornication shortened the lives of the people by 800 years. 90% of their lives were taken away because of fornication. The Bible declares “when sin is finished it brings forth death.” Think about that. Eight hundred years was cut off because of fornication. Do you see how sin shortened our lives?

As you can see, the problem is spiritual and not physical. That is why physical remedies cannot be the solution for mankind. It is a sin problem. And the solution is the preaching of Christ Jesus and Him crucified.

When “sin is finished”, the agents of death i.e. heart disease, lung disease, cancer, sickle cell disease, skin diseases, HIV, tumors, accidents, fights, kidney failure begin to make arrangements to kill us - whether by making the kidney stop, or by causing a car accident. Everyone has a different method by which the death sentence is carried out.

When Christ came to this Earth, He knew He was dealing with a complex problem. That is why He didn't just heal everyone. He knew that the problem was deeper. He knew why certain ailments had fastened themselves onto certain people. It was not just an issue of being ill. He knew that there was more to it than that!

When the Lord looked at our situation, He thought of the best way to help us, the best way to lengthen our lives. God planned the best way to save us from the things to which we were bound legally. That is why He came around preaching, teaching and healing. It pleased God that by the foolishness of preaching, He would save people.

Preaching and teaching solves your problems. First of all, your spirit is redeemed. You do not have to go to Hell anymore. Thank God

that by the power of preaching, your soul will be saved from eternal damnation.

When preaching has powerfully saved your soul, other areas of your life begin to be affected as well. After the soul has prospered, your health will be affected by this salvation. Your financial life is also affected after the salvation of your soul. God's Word begins to heal and solve all problems from within.

Beloved, I wish above all things THAT THOU MAYEST PROSPER and be in health, EVEN AS THY SOUL PROSPERETH.

3 John 2

Thinking naturally, you realize that if a person decides to do away with fornication, he reduces his exposure to the HIV infection and therefore death. When you hear the Word of God, and decide to marry instead of running around with different people, you reduce your exposure to many diseases. Preaching and teaching saves our lives in many ways we cannot even imagine.

Because of the Word of God, we decide to stop smoking and drinking alcohol. This extends our lives automatically by many years. You are at far less risk from cancer, heart disease, HIV, gonorrhea and depression when you live in line with the Word of God

A preaching tape can save your life. I believe in listening to preaching tapes. You will discover that the Word you get from the tape is “life to all who find it and health to all your flesh.”

My son, attend to my words…For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Proverbs 4:20, 22

Expose yourself to preaching and you will be exposing yourself to many blessings. Jesus came preaching and teaching.

He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

Psalm 107:20

The healings were just signs. When people came just for signs He told them they were evil. He taught us that loving signs and wonders without loving His preaching is an evil thing.

But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

Matthew 12:39

Preaching starts churches! God wants more preachers! God wants you to preach! Preaching and teaching will heal your marriage. It will reduce the tendency to fight; it will bring peace. Preaching will prevent divorce. Preaching changes lives!

Chapter 8

Why Teaching Is Powerful

One day Jesus was teaching in the temple and a demon shouted, “Leave us alone.” The Word is powerful: it attacks demons directly.

And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And there was in their synagogue A MAN WITH AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT; AND HE CRIED OUT, SAYING, LET US ALONE; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

Mark 1:21-24

Exposing yourself to the teaching of the Word brings healing to your life. Jesus did not just teach people. The people came to hear Him and after that, to be healed of their diseases.

But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together TO HEAR, AND TO BE HEALED by him of their infirmities.

Luke 5:15

There are many accounts in the Gospels where people came to hear Him teach. The reason God is going to raise you up as a powerful teacher is so that you can affect people's lives. God is going to raise you up as a powerful preacher and teacher.

And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came TO HEAR HIM, AND TO BE HEALED OF THEIR DISEASES;

Luke 6:17

Jesus always taught the Word of God before ministering healing. After teaching the Word, He would heal the sick. He did this because the Word of God attacks the source of your sickness. God reaches to the root cause of your poverty. As people are exposed to the Word, healing always comes.

My son, attend to my words…For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Proverbs 4:20, 22

Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63).

Life comes into you as you hear the Word. Thank God that through the teaching of His Word, your spirit comes alive. It is important to continue to expose yourself to the teaching of the Word.

We realize that the Word whether through preaching or teaching, heals us and saves us.

What is the difference between preaching and teaching?

The Differences between Preaching and Teaching

a. When the Word comes to us by preaching, our souls are ministered to.

b. When the Word comes by teaching, our minds are largely involved in receiving.

c. Teaching has a more lasting effect than preaching does.

d. Teaching is sometimes more difficult to assimilate. Preaching enters quickly but fades quickly.

e. Preaching is moving and stirring.

f. Preaching is more outwardly impressive than teaching.

g. Teaching is not as popular as preaching. If I were to put a preacher on the left and a teacher on the right, most people would

prefer the preacher.

h. Most people would think that a preacher is a more powerful man of God compared to the teacher. If the masses were asked to vote, they would probably choose the preacher because he would be more impressive.

i. Teachers usually have churches that grow steadily. This is because the truth is taught line upon line; and precept upon precept. When building a house, the blocks are laid systematically until you get an orderly and lasting structure.

Three Direct Effects of Teaching

1. The Teaching of the Word Brings Light

Demons abide in darkness. Demons of frustration, early death and poverty abide in darkness.

Pride is a type of darkness. That is why there are evil spirits where there is pride. Thank God, His Word is light.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalm 119:105

When the Word is taught, a light comes on in our hearts. Demons, which dwell in darkness, are forced to run away. As the Word is taught, spiritual illumination takes place. That is why people can be healed while teaching goes on. As the Word is taught, your life is transformed. The devil knows this and that is why he does not like you to listen to teaching.

That is why he does not want you to have a tape. A tape can change your life forever. One tape can take you to Heaven. One tape can turn you into a pastor! One tape can turn you from being a divorcee into a happily married person. A tape can give you stability, turn you from madness to sanity and give you health. The devil does not like teaching because of the light it brings.

Years ago, when I was doing my housemanship at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, I lived in one of the hostel rooms. There was a

time that my room was plagued with rats and mice.

Every night when I got to my room, I would put on the lights and suddenly, these rats would race all over the room and toward a particular hole in the ceiling. It would send shivers down my spine because I hated rats (and these were big ones). These rats were having a field day while I was out and when the lights were off. But as soon as I turned on the lights, they felt exposed and fled.

So it is with us when the light of the Word of God comes on in our lives. Demons are exposed and they are forced to flee. This is exactly how the Word of God operates. The Word throws light on the demons that dwell and flourish in the darkness of our lives!

When the light of the Word of God is off in your life (when you do not go to church, or when there is no Word in your life) demons are free to invade you. Demons look for darkness within human beings. The darkness of unforgiveness, bitterness, hatred, lust, lying, pride, disobedience, sin or anger. That is why the Bible enjoins us not to give any place to the devil. The presence of these dark areas opens the door for demonic maneuvers and operations.

Neither give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:27

You shall be free from satanic oppression when you put on the light of the Word.

2. The Teaching of the Word Is the Sword in Action

…and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Ephesians 6:17

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword…

Hebrews 4:12

Teaching is powerful. It drives away demons, mental diseases, blindness, uncleanness, pride, stupidity, lust, spiritual problems and

poverty. The sword pricks the demons and drives them away.

Since the demons do not want to be hurt by the sword of the Word they do all they can to stop you from taking in the teaching. That is why sometimes demons make you sleep in church, lest you hear the teaching. Hearing comes before healing!

…which came to hear him and to be healed…

Luke 6:17

3. The Teaching of the Word Is the Planting of the Seed

The sower soweth the Word.

Mark 4:14

A seed is planted when you hear the Word. If the preacher says, "you shall be blessed and prosperous," a seed is planted in your life. The words of a teacher are seeds, which grow and become mighty trees.

The reason why many people in my church want to be pastors is because of the seeds I have planted. What you plant is what you reap. Even in ordinary life the things we say about our children come to pass as they grow. As you continue to call your child an angel he grows up to have a sweet spirit and vice versa.

As you tell your congregation that it shall be well with them and that the Lord is their keeper and the shade upon their right hand, these promises come to pass.

The Lord is your helper, you shall live and not die, and it shall be well with you. You shall have the baby you thought you would not have!

Chapter 9

Church Planting and the Tent Ministry

One of the greatest keys to extensive church planting is the tent ministry. The tent ministry is the sacrifice of pastors and evangelists, who labour without being paid for their services. The enormity of the work is such that, without the strategy of tent ministry, very few churches will be planted. Almost every ministry I know has ground to a halt because of mounting bills, and the high cost of maintaining staff. It is virtually IMPOSSIBLE for the church to employ the people that are needed for the work of God.

The tent or lay ministry is not popular in some circles. In some cultures everybody must be paid for his services. The organist must be paid! The guitarist must be paid! The sound controller must be paid and the pastor constantly seeks a higher salary for his services.

Dear friend, most of the ripened harvest fields are in the poor regions of the world. How will the poor people of the Earth be reached in their poverty? Most of these people cannot pay for the services of good pastors and evangelists. The ministry of unpaid pastors and evangelists is the key to continued church planting.

Where the sacrificial nature of Christianity is compromised, church planting comes to an end. The church was born on the sacrifice of Christ. The church grew through the sacrifice of the apostolic church. Once again, the church will only expand through sacrifice

In the next two chapters, I will be sharing about the tent ministry. As far as I am concerned, it is only through the tent ministry that church planting will be possible on a large scale.

Seven Things You Should Know about the Tent Ministry

Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, where he met Aquila, a Jewish man from Pontus. Not long before this, Aquila had come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Emperor Claudius had ordered the Jewish people to leave Rome. Paul

went to see Aquila and Priscilla and found out that they were tent makers. PAUL WAS A TENT MAKER TOO. So he stayed with them and they worked together.

EVERY SABBATH, PAUL WENT TO THE JEWISH MEETING PLACE. He spoke to Jews and Gentiles and TRIED TO WIN THEM OVER.

Acts 18:1-4 (Contemporary English Version)

1. The tent ministry is actually the lay ministry.

It is the ability to combine secular work with real ministry. The best example of the tent ministry was the Apostle Paul's ministry. It is so called because Paul was a tent maker.

2. It is possible to combine secular work with the ministry.

It is a ministry in which you support yourself. You may ask, “Is this the way that God planned for ministry to be?” “Does the Bible not teach that they that preach the gospel must live of the gospel?”

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:14

I combined being a medical student with ministry. I know many people who are effectively ministering the Word of God and continuing in their professions.

Paul was the great church planter of the New Testament. He was able to accomplish great things for the Lord whilst he supported himself with the tent making business. The tent ministry is even more vital for church planting today.

3. The best New Testament example of the tent ministry is the Apostle Paul. The best Old Testament example is the Prophet Daniel.

Daniel had three jobs:

i. He was a Member of Parliament for the Babylonian Province.

Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

Daniel 2:48

ii. He was the Second Vice President to Belshazzar.

Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Daniel 5:29

iii. He was the Prime Minister during the rule of Darius.

It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

Daniel 6:1-2

4. Sometimes it is the will of God for you to be a tent minister and sometimes it is the will of God for you to be in full-time ministry.

In one breath, the right thing to do is to be fully supported by the ministry, but in another breath the right thing to do is to support yourself. It is important that we follow the leading of the Spirit at all times. Isn't it amazing that the right thing can become the wrong thing (“Anomia”), because God said so? Paul declared that he was instructed by the Lord to be both full and hungry.

I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I AM INSTRUCTED BOTH TO BE FULL AND TO BE HUNGRY, both to abound and to suffer need.

5. The tent ministry will be a prominent ministry in the last days.

Paul's ministry still lives on today. The best way some people can help in the ministry is to be like Paul - secular work during the week and then “reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews on the Sabbath day”.

And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers. AND HE REASONED IN THE SYNAGOGUE every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

Acts 18:3-4

6. Paul practised the tent ministry so that others would follow his good example.

I now place you in God's care. Remember the messages about his great kindness! This message can help you and give you what belongs to you as God's people.

I have never wanted anyone's money or clothes. You know how I HAVE WORKED WITH MY OWN HANDS TO MAKE A LIVING FOR MYSELF and my friends. By everything I did, I showed you how you should work to help everyone who is weak.

Remember that our Lord Jesus said, "More blessings come from giving than from receiving." After Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed.

Acts 20:32-36 (Contemporary English Version)

For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be

chargeable to any of you:

Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

2 Thessalonians 3:7-9

I am talking about a fruitful and lasting ministry. Paul was not a reverend minister who did nothing for God. He was indeed an anointed and powerful church planter. It is time for many who are called to follow this good example.

7. The tent ministry can be just as fruitful as full-time ministry.

I do not know of anyone who will say that the Apostle Paul was inferior to any of the other apostles. He laboured more abundantly and travelled more extensively. He planted more churches than any one else did. He was truly an effective, anointed and fruitful pastor.

Chapter 10

How and When to Flow in the Tent Ministry

1. When it is the only way you can live in certain geographical locations and do the ministry.

When missionaries were sent from Switzerland to Ghana two hundred years ago, they had to support themselves on the mission field. Many of them became farmers, teachers etc. There was obviously no way of making bank transfers to these missionaries. It is important for ministers to understand that there are times when secular work gives you the legitimate basis for being in particular places. I have pastors in certain countries that do secular work simply because they need to be able to live in that country legally.

Are we ready to do anything for Christ Jesus our Lord? If you have to hold down a secular job so that you can live and minister in a strange land will you do it? Is that asking too much? How do you think the Prophet Daniel was able to flourish in Babylon? He maintained his job as a Member of Parliament.

2. The tent ministry helps you avoid becoming a burden.

Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, THAT WE MIGHT NOT BE CHARGEABLE TO ANY OF YOU.

2 Thessalonians 3:8

There are times when being a full-time minister is a burden to a small congregation. Sometimes a particular person in the congregation is burdened by the fact that he has to support you all the time. There are times I wouldn't want to stay in certain people's homes. This is because I feel that my presence is burdensome to my host.

Once we went out preaching and we got back home very late. It was past midnight. Our hostess came out of her room looking very

sleepy and tired.

She said, "Oh, are you guys back?"

"What time is it?" she mumbled.

We found out that it was about one a.m.

"Would you like to eat?" She asked.

I thought to myself, "Of course I would like to eat. I am starving; I haven't eaten the whole day." But I muttered some non-committal and diplomatic answer.

My hostess continued, "I have some fish in the freezer, I can defrost it and make some stew."

I was quiet but she continued, "I have some rice which I can also prepare."

Then she asked again, "Would you like me to make the food?"

I thought to myself, "Should a Christian ask someone to defrost fish and boil rice at one a.m.?" I decided that I didn't want to be a burden to this dear hostess.

I smiled sheepishly and said, "Oh it is alright."

I went to bed on an empty stomach. I simply did not want to be a burden to my hostess.

I have learnt to carry secret supplies of food with me when I travel so that I do not become a burden to people. This is what Paul was talking about. He did not want his ministry to become a burden to anyone.

3. The tent ministry will enable you to survive in ministry without being paid by the church.

Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that WE MIGHT NOT BE CHARGEABLE TO ANY OF YOU:

2 Thessalonians 3:8

Four Ways that Paying Pastors Can Hinder the Ministry

a. Building projects are slowed down or stopped.

b. The church cannot buy the equipment it needs.

c. Missionaries cannot be sent out.

d. Immature church members who do not understand why pastors should be paid certain amounts of money could cause trouble in a new church. Some people simply do not understand why people who work for God should be blessed. I advise pastors to keep their lives as private as possible.

4. The tent ministry enables you to be free from all men.

For though I be FREE FROM ALL MEN, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

1 Corinthians 9:19

Many times people who give money develop an attitude because of the size of their donations. It is very important for pastors to be free from the negative attitudes of church members. The prophets were warned “don't be afraid of their faces”. This is because the facial expression on people's faces often intimidates us. There are times when our being tent ministers eliminates the need for people's gifts and donations hereby eliminating these bad attitudes.

For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

For though I BE FREE FROM ALL MEN, yet have I made myself

servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

1 Corinthians 9:16-19

5. The tent ministry enables you to enter the ministry whether finances permit it or not.

For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for NECESSITY IS LAID UPON ME; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then?

Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:16-18

Paul said, “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.” Sometimes we do not have a choice! We have to do his will whether there is a salary or not.

That is exactly how I feel. I do not think that I have a choice. I am bound to obey God. I feel that if I do anything apart form preaching His Word, God will destroy me. I have heard other pastors say the same thing.

One pastor said to me, “Before I was in the ministry, I knew that God had called me. At one time I felt that God would kill me if I didn't go into the ministry.”

He continued, “That is why I am in full-time ministry today.”

6. The tent ministry will ensure that you play a part in this great ministry.

And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I MIGHT BE PARTAKER thereof with you.

Many of us may never play a part in building the kingdom unless we do it as lay people. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all evangelists? Are all pastors? Obviously not! But thank God you can support yourself and make a significant contribution to the ministry as a tent minister.

7. Some people are able to relate better with unpaid ministers of the gospel who maintain their secular jobs.

God is merciful and He makes a way for all kinds of people to be saved. There are people who have their own impressions of full-time ministers and find it difficult to receive from them. They find it easier to receive from tent ministers who are obviously not in the ministry for the money.

8. To flow in the tent ministry, you need to be sacrificial.

The tent ministry is essentially sacrificial in nature. Unlike what many people think, the ministry is very tiring and stressful. Even paid ministers are often called upon to sacrifice.

Many pastors do not have a normal family life because their family life is constantly interrupted by the incessant demands of the congregation. When it is holiday time, instead of the pastor having time for his family, he has to attend various church and social functions. No one really cares about it until the pastor's children become rebels.

There are many pastors' children who hate the ministry. They feel the ministry steals their parents from them. Besides this, there are many stresses that come to the pastor and his wife by virtue of the position they hold. He is the focus of every spiritual attack; many people do not know this.

One time, when Israel went to war with Syria, the Syrian king gave a very revealing command to his generals and to his captains. He said to them; “do not fight with anyone. DON'T FIGHT WITH THE GREAT AND DON'T FIGHT WITH THE SMALL, FIGHT ONLY WITH THE KING PERSONALLY.”

But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, SAVE ONLY WITH THE KING OF ISRAEL.

1 Kings 22:31

You can see from this instruction that no target was significant enough except the King of Israel himself. The king represents the leader or the pastor who becomes the focus of the attack.

When a person takes on the sacrifices of ministry without being paid, he makes a double sacrifice.

Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, HAVE WE NOT POWER TO EAT AND TO DRINK? HAVE WE NOT POWER TO LEAD ABOUT A SISTER, A WIFE, AS WELL AS OTHER APOSTLES, AND AS THE BRETHREN OF THE LORD, AND CEPHAS? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? OR WHO FEEDETH A FLOCK, AND EATETH NOT OF THE MILK OF THE FLOCK? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?

Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with

the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:1-18

The tent ministry will test your Christian character. Virtues like self-control and temperance will be tested. When I was a medical student and doctor on the wards of the hospital, I had to sacrifice my resting times for the ministry. When people were watching TV, I could not afford that luxury. I didn't have time for useless socializing and chatting. All my spare time was taken up.

9. Selfishness is the greatest hindrance to the tent ministry.

Selfishness is the principal reason why many people do not get involved in the lay or tent ministry. Most people are basically self-centred in their outlook of life; they have no concerns for anyone except themselves. They are engrossed in the little world they have built around themselves. Selfishness speaks of self-centredness, self-concern, self-awareness, self-help and self-gratification.

A selfish person can never be a servant of the Lord. Selfishness makes you think about yourself but ministry makes you think about people you don't even know. The Apostle Paul lamented about this phenomenon. He noted that all men seek for their own welfare.

He said, “No one cares for the things of the Lord.”

For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

Phillippians 2:20-21

We are all selfish by nature but the deeper we get in the Lord, the less selfish we become. The barrenness of most Christians is a result of the spirit of selfishness.

Who cares if they go to Hell? At least I am going to Heaven. Who cares if there is a village somewhere that has not heard the gospel? At least my family and I are okay. Who cares if somebody is sick and lying on the hospital ward? At least I am well. Who cares if there is some dirty old prisoner languishing in jail? At least I am free!

That is the spirit of selfishness at work in the church and the Christian.

If Jesus were selfish, He would not have left His throne in glory and come to this rotten world.

10. Laziness is another great hindrance to the tent minister.

Most people are not prepared to work for anyone much less to work without being paid.

11. Use a lot of wisdom when practising the tent ministry.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

Matthew 10:16

Because of the intrinsic hatred for God and the ministry, many people would like to pick on someone who claims to be a pastor.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 3:1-2

People often look out for your faults at work or at school. They say things like, “I am surprised that a pastor would do that. I never knew that pastors also come to work late.”

I remember when I worked at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, the biggest hospital in my country, as a doctor; I never told them I was a pastor. I knew that at the slightest opportunity they would use it against me. While a student and a pastor, I never indicated that I was even religious. I didn't want them to know anything about me.

It is foolishness to go announcing to the whole world that you are a pastor or a religious leader. Jesus said we should be as wise as serpents. What does it mean to be as wise as a serpent? What wisdom does the serpent have? It has the wisdom to exist quietly in the midst of people who hate it.

The serpent is universally hated and killed on sight, with no questions asked. And yet, snakes flourish all around us. There are millions of snakes all over the world. How has the snake managed to live and multiply in a world that hates it utterly? By discretion, carefulness, judgment, secrecy, prudence and caution!

12. Become a financial support by engaging in the tent ministry.

I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to SUPPORT THE WEAK, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Acts 20:35

It is amazing that a large amount of financial support comes from my lay pastors. Many times when there is a special appeal for financial support, it is my lay pastors (tent ministers) who often support me most.

When you are involved in the ministry; you know the needs of the ministry. Tent ministers are a good support base for every church.

13. The tent ministry fights idleness in the church.

For we hear that there are some which walk among you

disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

2 Thessalonians 3:11

After people have been in the church for some years, they seem to know all your sermons. No matter what tricks you use, they are able to see through the message and identify where it is coming from.

I remember preaching a powerful series in church. People were really blessed. Many commented on how powerful the services had been. Then I had a note. This note was from a long-standing church member.

He wrote, “Dear pastor we were tremendously blessed by your message tonight.” He continued, “This is exactly what you preached five years ago. You only changed the title”. He went further and enumerated the messages from where he claimed I had duplicated my current series. Then to reassure me he said, “We were mightily blessed anyway so keep on doing the good work”.

You see, it is important that Christians get involved with the ministry otherwise they become critical busy bodies, analyzing and commenting on things that they do not even understand.

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Psalm 131:1

Chapter 11

Barrenness and Church Planting

When barrenness is taken away, fruitfulness is always the result. Barrenness is the number one cause for a lack of church planting in the modern Christian church. But God wants us to be fruitful. God wants us to plant churches. In order to be fruitful you must understand what barrenness really is. Some pastors are barren. No matter what they do, their ministries never flourish. This is the problem God wants to deal with in our churches.

In the next few chapters, we will be studying the concept of spiritual barrenness and how it affects church planting. Barrenness is the number one cause for a lack of church planting in our generation. There are a lot of activities and a lot of programmes but there is little or no church planting.

As we study, God will reveal to us the causes of barrenness in our lives, churches and ministries.

There are several Hebrew and Greek words that are translated “barren” or “barrenness”. These words throw light on the subject of spiritual and ministerial barrenness. Let us consider each of these words as definitions of barrenness.

Five Hebrew Words

1. AQAR - (Genesis 11:30; Genesis 25:21; Deuteronomy. 7:14; Judges 13:2, 3; 1 Samuel 2:5;)

This word means “the destruction or removal of generative organs'. It also means “To have non-functioning organs; to be barren or sterile”.

It is used in reference to people like Sarah, Zelelponi; the mother of Sampson and Rebecca.

There shall nothing cast their young, nor be BARREN (AQAR), in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfill.

Exodus 23:26

Churches or individuals suffering from "AQAR" barrenness are deficient in the generative aspects of ministry. This means they are deficient in the outreach and fruit bearing aspects of church life. They are unable to give birth to other churches. Such churches have many activities but programmes that generate new churches are absent.

Every minister must consider the outreach aspect of his ministry. Do you have crusades? Do you plant new churches? The absence of crusades, breakfast meetings, witnessing campaigns and church planting, shows a deficiency in the generative aspect of your ministry.

Barren people also receive the Word and probably have the tapes. They may even be involved in other activities of the church. They are seen at prayer meetings and become "fat" spiritually.

However, such people will not be involved in church planting, evangelism or soul winning. They have a deficiency in their spiritual generative organs.

2. SHAKOL - (Leviticus 26:22; 2 Kings 2:19, Deuteronomy 32:25)

This means "to miscarry, to suffer abortion, to be bereaved of children, to be barren, to cast your young, to make childless and to be deprived of children".

I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall ROB YOU OF YOUR CHILDREN, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate (SHAKOL).

Leviticus 26:22

Such churches or ministers cannot keep the souls that God gives them. As you can see, they constantly cast their young and suffer abortions. Such ministers cannot sustain the growth and are unable to continue in the things that God gives to them.

Many churches receive large numbers of visitors and even converts.

You must work on keeping these converts. You must make sure that your visitors come again. I always pray over my members. “Lord when they go, let them come back to church. As they come back, let them come with more people.” This kind of prayer counteracts “SHAKOL” barrenness. I pray that each member becomes a minister and that each minister gives birth to a church.

Another reason why such churches are unable to break out is that they attack their young leaders. They kill fresh blood. The leaders do not allow mavericks to flourish around them. The anointing on all of us is greater than the anointing on one person. You must allow fresh leaders and pastors to be released under your ministry. The fastest growth always occurs when there are multiple ministers working together.

3. MELECHAH - (Psalms 107:34; Jeremiah 17:6)

This word means “a salted land, a desert or a barren land”. It speaks of “no produce” and “no life”. The land is dead to any kind of seed.

People suffering from “MELECHAH” are spiritually salted lands. In spite of what you pour into them, they are unable to bear fruit. They are incapable of germinating seeds.

A cursory glance at every congregation will reveal several “salted lands” staring at you. Mercy and atonement! They have been in the church for many years and have heard many sermons. They have been anointed and prayed for specially, but still cannot bear fruit. Much is poured into them but little can be expected from these salted ones.

There are also salted churches. No matter the input, the church does not grow. No new churches are planted from that church. Until the salted land is healed, there will be no fruit.

For he shall be like the heath inthe desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places inthe wilderness, in A SALT LAND and not inhabited.

Jeremiah 17:6

A pastor who is a salted land does not give rise to other pastors of his own kind. He remains in the church he pastors, but cannot bring forth other pastors. Break out of the salted state and start to think of birthing many more churches.

I remember the story of a church that could not grow. No matter what happened and no matter who preached, there was no break through. One day a visiting pastor was waiting on the Lord and he had a vision. Way up in the ceiling he saw a demon sitting above the congregation. This evil spirit had greatly affected the church for many years. God had opened the pastor's eyes to see the “salt” that was making the church barren. He dealt with the evil spirit and commanded it to leave. After that experience, the church began to grow in leaps and bounds.

I believe there are real salted situations that need the healing hand of God. I see God removing the saltiness from your life, church and ministry!

4. OTSER - (Proverbs 30:16)

This Hebrew word means “to inclose, to hold back and to maintain'. It also means “to close up, to restrain, and retain”. In addition, it means “to shut up, to withhold and to stop”.

The grave; and the BARREN (OTSER) womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough.

Proverbs 30:16

People suffering from this kind of barrenness hold back intentionally. They know a lot, but they hold back and refuse to be fruitful. Pastors with “OTSER” barrenness have the finances and the anointing to plant churches. However, they give their strength to other things like orphanages, schools and social work. Some of them are more concerned with being politically influential and socially acceptable. The drive for church planting is restrained.

Such people can do many things for the Lord but are restrained and hold back their talents. These are usually experienced people in the Lord who could do much more for Jesus.

Often they have decided to give their strength and talents to other things. In your congregation, you will notice people who are leaders of Old Boys Associations or even political groups. They have time for politics, soccer, MBA's, PhD's and other activities. However, when it comes to the work of God, they are inclosed and restrained. They are reserved when it comes to prayer and worship, but vocal when it comes to discussing politics and other issues. These are the people suffering from “OTSER”.

5. TSIYAH - (Isaiah 41:18; Psalm 63:1)

This word speaks of being “parched and barren”. It speaks of “a drought, a dry land and a wilderness”.

I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the DRY LAND (TSIYAH) springs of water.

Isaiah 41:18

This kind of church is often dry of the Spirit. It is a wilderness devoid of worship, prayer and the lifting up of hands. Such churches and individuals are very secular and logical in their approach to life and the ministry. Spiritual dryness and the lack of worship is a true cause of barrenness.

Introducing new worship songs will often fight against this kind of barrenness. Sometimes changing your worship leader will lead to a major change in your church. Changing your choir leader and the type of songs your choir sings can greatly affect your church. Perhaps if the choir were to sing songs about soul winning and reaching the lost, church planting would begin. Do not wait forever to make the changes you need to make.

Two Greek Words

1. STEIROS - (Luke 1:7, 36; Luke 23:29; Galatians 4:27)

And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was BARREN (STEIROS), and they both were now well stricken in years. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a

son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

Luke 1:7, 36

This word means “to be stiff and unnatural”. It speaks of sterility and barrenness. “Stiffness” speaks of people who are unyielding and disobedient to the Word of God. Such people love to look distinguished and diplomatic. Sometimes they pretend to be spiritual but in reality they are not.

Churches often have these unspiritual and stiff people sitting in the front row. This can prevent growth and induce the “STEIRAS” atmosphere that does not allow growth. You will notice that growing churches are full of lively, exuberant and excited people dancing and praising the Lord. It is time to remove the “deep freezers” from the prominent positions we have given them. The church is not a “who is who” parade.

2. ARGOS - (2 Peter 1:8)

This word means “inactive, unemployed lazy and useless”. It also speaks of “being idle, slow and barren”. Surprisingly, laziness is one of the principle causes of unfruitfulness in ministry. Lazy people are inactive in church. Their laziness makes them useless to God.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be BARREN NOR UNFRUITFUL (ARGOS) in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:8

Unfortunately the church is made up of masses of spiritually inactive people. To break this type of barrenness, it is important to preach about diligence. It is important to teach the congregation that they must win souls for the Lord.

Chapter 12

How to Diagnose Barrenness

It is important to diagnose barrenness when it exists in the ministry. The diagnosis of a problem often leads to the solution. Even in medicine, 80% of our problems are solved when the diagnosis is made.

Many ministries are operating under a spirit of barrenness. Many pastors are unaware that they can have a greater level of fruitfulness. In this chapter, I will show you some signs you must look out for in the ministry.

If Jesus were standing by you, He would say these words to you

Herein is my Father glorified, THAT YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT; so shall ye be my disciples.

John 15:8

How to Diagnose Barrenness in the Church

One way to diagnose barrenness is to look at how the dictionary defines it. If you apply these definitions to your church, you will know whether you are barren or not. God will show you if a spirit of barrenness is in operation.

Let us now look at the dictionary definitions of barrenness and see how they apply to ministry.

Twenty Definitions of Barrenness

1. To be barren means to be unfruitful.

2. To be barren means to be sterile.

3. To be barren means to be childless, heirless and issueless.

4. Barrenness means you are non-productive.

5. To be barren means to be deficient in production.

6. Barrenness means you are not conceiving at all or producing at all.

7. A barren person is someone who produces in very small quantities.

8. A barren land is a wasteland.

9. Barren trees do not produce the normal fruit.

10. Barrenness speaks of bleakness.

11. To be barren is to be depleted.

12. To be barren is to be deserted.

13. Barrenness speaks of dryness.

14. A barren thing can be described as not being copious.

15. A barren land is a scanty land.

16. Barrenness is sometimes dullness.

17. A barren individual does not produce after his kind.

18. Barrenness speaks of wanting or needing the power of conception.

19. Barren places are impoverished.

20. Barren places are un-tillable.

Let us now look at the symptoms of barrenness within the church context. Examine your ministry and see whether barrenness exists.

Barrenness in the Church

Barrenness can be said to exist in a church if any of the following exist:

1. If there is no growth in the number of your church members.

2. If there are no converts or, no growth in the number of converts.

3. If there is no growth in church attendance.

4. If there is no growth in the number of full-time staff.

5. If there is no baptism or, no growth in the number of people baptized.

6. If there is the absence of healings and miracles.

7. If there is no growth in the number of leaders in the church.

8. If there is no increase in the knowledge of God.

9. If there is no growth in the depth of relationships.

10. If there is no growth in the number of visions and dreams given by the Holy Spirit or none at all.

11. If there is no programme to send out missionaries or, to increase the number of missionaries sent out.

12. If there is no growth in the finances of the church.

13. If there is no increase in the number of scriptures you know.

14. If there is no growth in your experience in the ministry.

15. If there is the absence of or, no growth in the outreaches of the church.

16. If there is no growth in the length and depth of your prayer or no prayer at all.

17. If there is no increase in challenges and mountains to overcome.

18. If there is no challenge and inspiration to a greater vision.

19. If there is no growth in understanding.

20. If there is no growth in fellowships and branches.

Now that you have diagnosed the problem, receive the prophecy of the Lord for your ministry. Believe that these words are coming to pass in your life.

SING, O BARREN, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

ENLARGE THE PLACE OF THY TENT, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, LENGTHEN THY CORDS, and strengthen thy stakes; FOR THOU SHALT BREAK FORTH ON THE RIGHT HAND AND ON THE LEFT; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

FEAR NOT; FOR THOU SHALT NOT BE ASHAMED: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but WITH GREAT MERCIES WILL I GATHER THEE. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I HAVE MERCY ON THEE, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

Isaiah 54:1-8

Chapter 13

How to Fight Different Kinds of Barrenness

Fighting the Barrenness of Old Age

Abram married Sarai, but she was not able to have children.

Genesis 11:30 (Contemporary English Version)

Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I PRAY THEE, GO IN UNTO MY MAID; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

Genesis16:1-4

We all know the story of Abraham and Sarah. You could consider Sarah as a type of the church. You could also consider her as a type of minister. Sarah could be likened to a pastor who is not bearing as much fruit as he ought to. Sarah could be likened to a wilderness kind of church in which there is no life.

1. Do not transfer the duty of outreach and church planting to anyone else.

The pastor must lead the congregation to win the souls and bear fruit. According to Genesis 16:1-2, Sarah shifted the responsibility of childbearing to someone else. This was an attempt to overcome

the barrenness she was experiencing. She tried to overcome barrenness in the wrong way.

2. Do not reject the prophetic Word.

Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my Lord being old also?

Genesis 18:12

Prophetic messages can make a difference in your ministry. Believe in the Lord and you shall be established, believe in His prophets and you shall prosper. Sarah laughed when she heard the prophecy about Isaac. Receive the visitation of God for your life through revelations, dreams and the spoken Word.

Years ago, I received a message from a prophet. He saw me carrying a flaming torch and leading many people. He gave this message to me in 1980. Twenty-four years have gone by and this prophecy remains in my heart as a true vision. It encouraged me to do the work of God as a student. It encouraged me to persist in the ministry even after school.

3. Believe in God, His prophets and in the preaching of his Word.

And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

Genesis 17:15

Walk in your calling. You must overcome the greatest enemies of the faith walk. Walking in fear and intimidation will not lead to fruitfulness in ministry.

4. Take the practical steps that lead to fruitfulness even if it looks like something for younger people.

For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age… And Abraham called the name of his son…Isaac.

Genesis 21:2-3

Decide to be youthful, zealous, emotional, exciting, energetic and adventurous again. This will break the spell and curse of barrenness over your ministry. Sarah had sex with her husband at the age of ninety. No matter what prophecy is spoken over your life, there will always be some practical things you have to do. Isaac was not supernaturally conceived as in the case of Christ Jesus. He was conceived by the normal method of sexual intercourse. Sarah had to undress and act like an energetic young lady with a youthful husband. Abraham and Sarah were forced to engage in sexual happiness in their nineties. Can you imagine a ninety year old, menopausal woman acting like a pretty youthful bride again?

Some ministers act and think like people that are too old. Some amount of youthfulness is needed in the ministry. Youthfulness is necessary for fruitfulness.

Fighting the Barrenness of Familiarity

Familiarity is the greatest block to the anointing. It cuts off the flow of the anointing that is needed for church planting and church growth. Ministry is a spiritual thing and unless spiritual principles are obeyed, the ministry dries up and barrenness results.

Michal is a type of barren ministry. Michal suffered from familiarity toward her husband. She paid for it by becoming barren. Many people have become barren in ministry because they became too familiar with the man of God.

David went home so he could ask the Lord to bless his family.

But Saul's daughter Michal went out and started yelling at him. 'You were really great today!' she said. 'You acted like a dirty old man, dancing half-naked in front of your servants' slave girls'

David told her, 'The Lord didn't choose your father or anyone else in your family to be the leader of His people.

The Lord chose me and I was celebrating in honour of him. I'll show you how great I can be! I'll even be disgusted to myself. But those slave girls you talked about will still honour me'.

Michal never had any children.

2 Samuel 6:20-23 (Contemporary English Version)

7 Things Everyone Should Know about Familiarity

1. Familiarity means to know someone or something very well and in such a way as to cause you to lose your admiration, respect and sense of awe. It also connotes a sense of becoming presumptuous, where a person is too confident in a way that shows a lack of respect.

2. Familiarity was the cause of Michal's barrenness.

3. Familiarity is still the cause of spiritual barrenness in Christians today.

4. Familiarity is the greatest block to receiving God's power from God's men.

5. No matter how great the gift of God, it is neutralized by familiarity. Jesus was the greatest healer and teacher, yet his anointing was neutralized by the presence of familiar people.

And he went out from thence, and CAME INTO HIS OWN COUNTRY; and his disciples follow him.

And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying,

From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? IS NOT THIS THE CARPENTER, the son of Mary …

And they were offended at him. AND HE COULD THERE DO NO MIGHTY WORK, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

Mark 6:1-3, 5

This Scripture shows us that Jesus could not perform miracles in His

hometown. They knew Him too well to receive Him as the Son of God. They had questions about His parents, His family and His background.

6. Moses who commanded a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day could not impress his own sister Miriam. She criticized him about his marriage and suffered for it. My heart is often closed to those who are familiar towards me. I simply do not flow towards them. I can virtually sense the questions in the hearts of people suffering from familiarity.

7. Familiarity carves out a road of ministry for anointed people. It directs them away from their colleagues, friends and family. It leads them towards the non-familiar, the poor the forgotten and neglected ones.

This is where the outsiders come in. They often come in to replace people that have become too familiar with the anointed one.

Four Groups That Often Suffer from Familiarity

1. Colleagues

Usually it is people who know you closely who suffer from familiarity. When I started my church as a medical student, very few of my colleagues were able to receive from me. They knew me too well and would say in their hearts, “Is this not Dag? We know him and we know his class. We saw him struggling at an exam last week. We know when he passes and when he fails! How can this lanky boy call himself a pastor?”

2. Relatives

Relatives also suffer from familiarity. They would say. “Is this not Azoyzoy's (my father's nickname) son? We carried him when he was a baby.”

They ask, “Do you remember me? I carried you when you were two years old.”

They say, “I knew your father very well.”

With this background, how can such people receive me as a man of God?

3. Pastors' wives

Pastor's wives often suffer from severe familiarity. Just like Michal, when everyone is impressed, they are not impressed with their husbands. They say things like, “I know you”, “No one knows you better than I do”, “I am the only one who can tell you certain things!” “I am not one of those people who give you praise and affirmation in the office!”, “If people knew how you really were, they would be surprised”, “No one knows what you are really like.”

In a sense, they are right about all these things, but the fact is that they are also victims of familiarity!

4. Close friends and Associates

These people also experience familiarity. They have been around you for so long and they have seen your vicissitudes. It is easy to slip and slide into familiarity. Sometimes it would be better not to know someone closely in order not to develop an air of familiarity.

Familiarity breeds disloyalty. Familiarity created Judas. Judas is referred to, as “mine own familiar friend”. When people are familiar, they lose their respect and they cross boundaries they should never cross. Familiarity makes people say things they should never say.

When Michal spoke against David, she stood in the shoes of a rebel fighting and opposing God's anointed. She became a critic of “the man after God's own heart”. David had built a tabernacle but she was not impressed. God called him “a man after mine own heart” but she, a mere mortal, despised him. Imagine that God is impressed but you are not impressed. Isn't it amazing?

Familiarity often stems from jealousy and carnality. Michal was jealous of the girls who seemed to appreciate David's ministry. She disliked the fact that David seemed to be impressed with these young whippersnappers.

Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, HOW GLORIOUS WAS THE KING TODAY, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!

2 Samuel 6:20

When Miriam criticized Moses, she no longer saw him as God's anointed. She moved into the flesh and became a disloyal rebel.

And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

Numbers 12:1

Judas was the highest kind of traitor. He paid the ultimate price for allowing himself to be deceived by familiarity.

Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

Psalm 41:9

Knowledge without Experience

I have had different people becoming close to me at different times in my life. Circumstances can sometimes cause people to associate closely with the man of God. Under these circumstances, the person is susceptible to the spirit of familiarity. It takes spiritual discipline not to become familiar. I have noticed in my life and ministry how people become over familiar when given the slightest chance. Let me just remind you of the definition of familiarity.

Familiarity means, “to know someone or something very well and in such a way as to cause you to lose your admiration, respect and sense of awe. It also connotes a sense of becoming presumptuous, where a person is too confident in a way that shows a lack of respect.”

One day, a young lady was having a problem in her marriage. Her

husband said to her, “I am going to report you to the Bishop”.

She retorted, “I don't care. He also has problems”.

I smiled when I heard this. I knew that it was only familiarity that was rearing its head. Perhaps I was wrong to have allowed this person to spend a few nights in our home.

On another occasion, another relative who had spent a few days with our family was having some problems. After counseling this relative, she seemed to have understood what I had shared with her. She thanked me and seemed to be blessed.

Unfortunately, I later heard that she had said that I was a man of knowledge and not experience. What she was saying was that I had no experience in the kind of problem she had and that my advice was therefore theoretical.

I thought to myself, “Today, I have become a man of knowledge without experience. It is only because I allowed this person to relate closely to my family and I, that she had the nerve to make such a comment.”

Sometimes it is better to know someone from afar so that you can continue to receive from his ministry. When you are too familiar with your pastor, you can mistakenly see him as a man of knowledge without experience.

Assess Your Familiarity Level

In your relationship with a man of God, are you becoming familiar? The following signs will help you determine to what extent you are familiar. Remember that familiarity is the highest kind of anointing killer. It has the highest form of neutralizing the power of God's gift.

Twelve Signs of Familiarity

1. Often sitting at the back of the church.

Familiarity is when you are no longer intrigued and excited about the pastor and his preaching. You do not bother to come near anymore. Familiar people just sit at the back and observe from a

distance.

Once I attended a Kenneth Hagin conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma. When I came into the hall, the ushers tried to give me a seat at the back.

I thought to myself, “How can I sit at the back when Kenneth Hagin is preaching. I want to be as near as possible!” I negotiated with the usher and even made a friend.

I told him, “Sir, you don't know where I have come from.”

I continued, “I have flown thousands and thousands of miles to be here today. I need to be as near as possible. There is no way I can go upstairs or even to the back.”

He seemed to understand and eventually I had my way. Unbelievably, I managed to sit on the second row. I was so excited when Kenneth Hagin walked by my seat as he preached.

You see, when you are familiar, seeing a man of God nearby or from afar makes no difference.

Later on, I had a discussion with the principal of their Bible School. I asked him if they had any problems with their students. To my surprise, he did. Their main problem was familiarity. He said to me. “There are some students who do not come for important conferences like these.” He lamented, “This is a great prophet and people come from all over the world to receive from him. But right here, there are students who do not bother to cross the road and come to church”.

You see, familiarity breeds contempt. Familiarity is all about knowing someone very well. This causes you to lose your admiration and respect.

2. Yawning

Yawning is often a sign of boredom. A familiar person is presumptuous and arrogantly assumes he knows what is coming. Often, people who yawn during the preaching of the Word are saying, “I know this sermon, I know what is coming. I know his line

of thought. This man has nothing new to say," Forgive!

3. Sleeping during preaching.

Sleeping occurs when we are tired. But sometimes it occurs as a result of monotony and boredom, when the man of God fails to intrigue you anymore, you may find yourself sleeping as he preaches.

4. Not buying or listening to tapes.

Someone who listens to preaching tapes has not become familiar with the pastor's voice. He sees it as an opportunity to be continuously blessed by the pastor when he is not around. Have you asked yourself why you do not buy tapes anymore? The answer may be familiarity.

5. Not buying and reading books written by your man of God.

I notice how people come from afar to buy my books. There are times people have travelled many miles to acquire and devour large quantities of my books and tapes. Amazingly my own church members often pass by these same books and tapes and instead call for two meat pies and a bottle of Coca Cola. Familiarity causes you to lose your sense of wonder and intrigue.

6. Discussing the background of the man of God.

Every man of God basically, is a "man". Since he is a man, he goes through what all men go through. No man that God ever chose had a perfect life. He has a past! He has a family. He has failings. He has an imperfect marriage. He has challenges just like every one else. It's easy to pick on any aspect of his natural life and neutralize him. Discussing the man of God in a natural way is a sure sign that you have lost your sense of fascination for him. This is the surest way to cancel out the effect of the anointing on your man of God.

Thumos and Ekplesso

When Jesus preached in His hometown, the Scripture says in Luke 4:28, "when they heard these things, they were filled with wrath.' The word "wrath" in Greek is the word "THUMOS". This means

incipient displeasure fermenting in the mind, it speaks of fierceness, indignation (as if breathing hard) and wrath. The familiar people were angry with Jesus" sermon.

But when He preached in Galilee according to Luke 4:32 "they were astonished at His doctrine". The word "astonished" is the Greek word "EKPLESSO" which means to be amazed, astonished and struck with terror.

Notice that there are only four verses between THUMOS and EKPLESSO. Notice also that THUMOS took place in Nazareth, Jesus' hometown. EKPLESSO took place in a city of Galilee about two hundred kilometers from Jesus' hometown of Nazareth.

7. Discussing the family issues of the man of God.

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

Mark 6:3

By doing this, you are cutting yourself from receiving God's miracle for your life. When Jesus went to his hometown, there was a long discussion as to who he really was. Someone said, "I know that boy, he is my nephew. He and his father have repaired my wardrobes and cupboards for many years".

Jesus could do very few miracles because of the high level of familiarity and doubt in the city. Do not let familiarity cut off your blessing.

8. Fault-finding and magnifying faults.

Whenever you think of the great men of God you respect, you do not often think of their faults. When there is a visiting preacher, no one considers whether he is impatient or easily angered. No one thinks of whether this man is in debt or whether he has an extravagant lifestyle. All we do is to receive the ministry of this man of God.

However, these are thoughts that occur to us about men of God that

we are familiar with. We think, “He must be angry today, this man is not patient.” As he preaches we say to ourselves, "We understand what he is saying; why does he not progress to the next point?”

I remember years ago, I had a church member who really enjoyed my messages. She recommended me highly to many people who later joined the church. However as time went by, she became familiar with my preaching and me.

One day after church she said to me, “I think you went over last week's point for too long.” She continued, “There was very little time for the new points that you brought up.”

A few weeks later, she made another remark, “The repetition in your preaching is too much.” After this I noticed the frown on her face each time I preached. This lady eventually stopped coming to church.

She might have been right but what she did not realize was that, I was preaching to people who came to church this week and missed the next week. I virtually had a new crowd every week. I might have had my faults, but God has worked through me in spite of them.

Have you removed the log in your own eye? Why are you concentrating so hard on the speck in the pastor's eye? Familiarity has made you critical.

9. Evaluating and rating men of God.

Democracy in its essential nature, calls on us to evaluate our leaders constantly. This is what enables us to vote for the right person. Unfortunately, many are deceived when they think that this same practice of evaluation must be brought into the church.

I was coming home one day after church when someone asked a question in the car. He asked, “How did you find the sermon?”

The car was quiet for a moment then someone said, “I think he did well, I will give him 70%.”

Then an older man said, “No, no, no. He deserves about 49%.”

Someone asked “Why 49%, the message wasn't too bad?”

I mused to myself, “This poor pastor is being assessed by his congregation.”

10. Not believing the man of God's advice.

When you regard someone highly, you cherish whatever advice he has to offer. As familiarity sets in, it becomes more and more difficult to accept advice. Every time advice is given there is a reason not to follow it.

11. Having no regard for the anointing.

When you become familiar, you no longer relate with a man of God spiritually. The fact that he is even anointed does not occur to you. All you see are natural things. If your eyes are on the natural you will see weakness, dishonour and corruption.

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in CORRUPTION; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in DISHONOUR; it is raised in glory: it is sown in WEAKNESS; it is raised in power:

1 Corinthians 15:42-43

The anointing for ministry is transferred from one man of God to another. The anointing for church planting is transferred from one person to another. Elisha had an exemplary relationship with Elijah. He called him “father” and served him for many years. He did not lose regard for the anointing because of his closeness. He was the beneficiary of a double portion of one of the greatest anointings.

Not every one suffers from familiarity. Some people are able to stay close and still have a high regard for the anointing. I have people around who have seen my human “weakness”, “dishonour” and “corruption” for many years and yet they maintain a sense of awe, fascination and respect for the presence of God upon my life. That is what Elisha did for many years and he received the double portion of the anointing that was on the life of Elijah. Do not be deceived by the apparent weakness of God's men. The weakness is God

ordained. It is intended to filter off unworthy recipients of the grace of God.

Jesus taught us to appear weak in the face of arrogant and aggressive people. Turn the other cheek simply means do not fight. It could even mean act weak! Do not mind if they think you have no power. Is it not a “weakling” who would subject himself to more humiliating slaps? Is it not a weakling who would allow himself to be cheated of his clothes? But this is the Lord's instruction to us.

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, TURN TO HIM THE OTHER ALSO.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, LET HIM HAVE THY CLOAK ALSO. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, GO WITH HIM TWAIN. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Matthew 5:39-42

Sick but Anointed

Now Elisha was FALLEN SICK OF HIS SICKNESS WHEREOF HE DIED. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.

And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.

And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.

And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

2 Kings 13:14-19

Elisha was sick but anointed. He was dying but he was still anointed. His weakness, dishonour and corruption were apparent to all. He performed his last miracle on his death bed and God moved mightily. One of the highest kinds of deception is to look on outward appearances and pass judgment.

…for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7b

This is what leads to racism and prejudice of which we are all guilty. Mercy and forgiveness! How often we judge people by what we see on the outside. Our error will be exposed shortly.

Dead but Anointed

And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and TOUCHED THE BONES OF ELISHA, HE REVIVED, AND STOOD UP ON HIS FEET.

2 Kings 13:20-21

You can even be dead and anointed! Believe it or not, the lingering anointing on a dead prophet raised someone from the dead. It is easy to be deceived by the natural weakness of God's servants.

12. Not honouring and appreciating your man of God.

As you get used to your pastor, it is easy to take him for granted. We often neglect those with whom we are familiar.

I remember one pastor who had never been honoured by his congregation. His church was constantly blessing a particular honoured visiting preacher. When this visiting preacher came to hold a convention, the crowds would gather and the people would express their appreciation for the visiting minister. They would bring money and gifts to honour this visiting minister. But the church would never honour its own pastor. The deception here is that the visitor is the one who is sent from God to them. But the reality is that their own familiar pastor is the one who labours over them with love.

I teach my church members that it is biblical to honour and give gifts to the man of God. This is not to enhance the lifestyle of the man of God but it is to honour God's gift and to kill the spirit of familiarity.

Chapter 14

Intercession: The Way out of Barrenness

The Church Planting Ministries of Paul and Barnabas

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

AS THEY MINISTERED TO THE LORD, AND FASTED, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

And WHEN THEY HAD FASTED AND PRAYED, AND LAID THEIR HANDS ON THEM, THEY SENT THEM AWAY.

So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

Acts 13:1-4

The ministries of Paul and Barnabas were born out of intercession. The greatest church planters of the New Testament times were born as they ministered unto the Lord and fasted. A praying church will always lead to new ministries and church growth. The way out of barrenness is the way into church planting. It is the way into evangelism.

I believe that fervent prayer will almost always lead to fruitfulness in a minister's life. A prayerful church almost always becomes fruitful. Churches are planted and ministers are sent out when real prayer begins.

The Ministry of Hannah

Hannah is a good example of a barren ministry. Hannah is one of the great examples of someone who broke out of the power of barrenness and became very fruitful. The great key that Hannah

demonstrated was again the key of intercession. Evangelists and missionaries are always born out of intercession. Hannah was in serious trouble. She desperately needed a breakthrough. She didn't just doodle and dawdle. To “doodle and dawdle” means to “hang around, loiter, to waste time and to make wavy impressions.” She was dead serious about what she wanted from God. Dear pastor, fervent prayer will make you give birth to a new dimension in ministry. Intercession will always lead to new spiritual children.

Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

1 Samuel 1:13

The Ministry of Elijah

Elijah's ardent prayer as he bent over asking for rain, remains the most well known example of fervent prayer.

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and HE CAST HIMSELF DOWN UPON THE EARTH, AND PUT HIS FACE BETWEEN HIS KNEES,

And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

1 Kings 18:41-46

This is the classic example of fervent prayer that was spoken of by James. I see you praying fervently to release the rain of God's blessing on your ministry! Look at the example of Elijah as he prayed to God for rain. Elijah's prayer released the rain of God. When the rain comes, there will be new plants. All the new churches are waiting for the rain. The new things that God has in store will be released through the rain.

Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

Zechariah 10:1

The Ministry of Jacob

And Jacob was left alone, and there WRESTLED A MAN with him until the breaking of the day.

Genesis 32:24

Jacob's all-night wrestling prayer yielded tremendous results. Jacob was blessed and so was his seed. Several thousand years have gone by but the fruit of this fervent prayer is evident for all to see. Israel still stands as one of the most favored nations on the Earth.

The Ministry of Moses

Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

SO JOSHUA DID AS MOSES HAD SAID TO HIM, AND FOUGHT WITH AMALEK: and Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

And it came to pass, when MOSES HELD UP HIS HAND, THAT

ISRAEL PREVAILED: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

Exodus 17:8-12

Moses' burning prayer for victory over Amalek, is another example of fervent prayer. Amalek is a type of demonic force that fights against God's church from behind. The constant attacks by Amalek will distract the church planting drive of every ministry. It is important to rise up in the ministry and deal with Amalek spiritually.

The Jerusalem Church

The New Testament Church prayed fervently for the power of the Holy Spirit to be upon their leaders.

And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and THEY SPAKE THE WORD OF GOD WITH BOLDNESS.

Acts 4:23, 24, 30, 31

God heard their prayer and look at the results. When a church begins to pray fervently there are always results. The Word of God is preached when prayer goes forth. Churches are planted when the Word of God is preached.

It is important to stress that fervent prayer is what makes the difference. Sometimes, I look at people who claim to be having a prayer meeting. Some of them are sleeping and others are just whiling away time. How would you feel if someone fell asleep whilst talking to you? You would think that he is either disrespectful or very uninterested in you.

The Ministry of Jesus Christ

Jesus prayed passionately for the will of God to be done in His life.

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Hebrews 5:7

The evidence of this was when He began to sweat blood. Fervent prayer always works. The ministry of Jesus was a great success! Two thousand years after these prayers, churches are still being planted. Books are still being written. Songs are being composed about Christ. More people are volunteering their lives to the service of our great God.

You will have great success in your ministry when you learn how to pray fervently. Whenever you don't know what to do, do what Jesus did. Jesus shouted when He prayed! Jesus prayed until He was sweating! Read it for yourself!

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Luke 22: 44

Chapter 15

Covenants and Church Planting

God is a covenant keeping God. There is a little understood revelation on how to move the hand of God, which I call the key of covenant making.

Hannah made a covenant to give her child to the Lord. There is no need for anyone to make a covenant before you give your child for the service of the Lord. However initiating a covenant with the Lord can provoke Him to bless you supernaturally; Hannah provoked God to open her womb and to release her children to her. She promised Him the first child even if it was the only one.

Jacob was another person who covenanted to the Lord and by that invoked a great blessing on his life.

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on… then shall the LORD be my God:

Genesis 28:20-21

A final example of someone who covenanted to the Lord was Jephthah.

And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

Judges 11:30-31

Covenant making is a special kind of prayer in which you engage the Lord in a legally binding agreement. Many people become unfaithful when He honours them in the ministry. The Lord is looking for faithful people who will remain true to His calling as the

years go by. Perhaps a prayer of commitment from you to always be faithful to the call of God will release the grace of God that you so desire upon your life. If you will not be faithful to God why will He give you His precious anointing?

All those who made these covenants kept them and the Lord also kept His side of the covenant.

Chapter 16

The Anointing of Rebecca

I Prophesy the Blessing of Rebecca on You!

As you read this chapter receive the blessing of Rebecca! I prophesy the anointing of Rebecca over your life and ministry! Say it over and over to yourself and believe that the grace for fruitfulness and church growth are released in your life and ministry. It shall surely come to pass! It shall surely come to pass at last!

And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

Genesis 24:60

"And they blessed Rebecca..."

I bless you to become endued with power for ministry!

"... Thou art our sister..."

I declare that you are my brother and colleague in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are working together for the Master. We have the victory over the enemy. No weapon formed against us will prosper. One may put to flight a thousand, but two of us shall put to flight ten thousand.

"...be thou the mother of thousands of millions..."

May you be endued with the power for ministry! May you become the father and mother of thousands and thousands of spiritual children! May you have great increase! You will see thousands of thousands coming to the Lord in your ministry! You will experience the things that God has prepared for you!

"...And let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them"

May you have victory over Satan and demons! May you conquer towns, villages and cities for Christ! May the battle always be in the gates of your enemy and never in your own gate!

Stand and fight, for it is the last battle on this Earth. The gates of Hell have been opened wide but Heaven has also released its forces. We shall surely win for the captain of the host is Jesus.

Many are wounded but many are still strong! Rise from the ashes! Let the wounded join in to fight for the last time. We can win says the Lord! We shall win says the Lord! Your scars shall become the reason for your honour in the resurrection. In that day, the wounds of battle shall make you an honourable warrior. Greater and greater is the glory that awaits my faithful servants!

Your glittering crowns, your beautiful mansions, your precious stones and your unspeakable rewards are piling up for eternity. Fear not for I have determined the time and the hour of your victory!

Chapter 17

Sacrifice and Church Planting

And Jesus answered them, saying, the hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat FALL into the ground and DIE, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much FRUIT.

John 12:23 -24

Sacrifice is the missing ingredient for church planting. This master key will take the average ministry from barrenness to fruitfulness. Sacrifice is the key that will transform a reverend minister from an official with a title, to a truly fruitful minister. It will make a church grow from a single church to a chain of churches. It will make a pastor move into church planting.

The readiness to die is a missing ingredient in many good churches. Many of our churches will remain small until we have people who are ready to sacrifice. There comes a time when what is needed is sacrifice. Failure to sacrifice always results in barrenness.

A lot of churches have reached the borderline. Many ministries can do more but they don't. It's because they don't want to sacrifice. They do not lack information or knowledge.

Many people know what I know. If you have read my books, you must have some knowledge. However, knowledge is not enough! You will not have the fruits I have even if you have the knowledge that I have. For you to have what I have, you must pay the price. There is a price for everyone to pay. The price of glory is the same for everyone!

The Scripture says that unless a corn of wheat disappears into the ground and dies, it will be alone.

The corn of wheat symbolizes the missionary. And the missionary is

the one who will be sent out to plant the churches. To be alone means to be fruitless. It means to be without members or followers. This dying process in the man of God will eventually bring out much fruit.

Jesus would not have borne the fruit He did if He had not died on the cross. He would have been alone in Heaven with His Father. He could not have saved us if He had not died and gone to Hell. To win followers for Himself and His Father, He had to fall in the ground and die.

The corn of wheat has to fall into the ground and die. When the seed falls into the ground, it disintegrates and decomposes. This is what we call dying. The seed actually goes through a process before it comes out as fruit. That can only take place when it disappears and dies.

The need to "die" is the most important truth to grasp. There are many sincere leaders who know many things. They have heard much and think they are high up in God. Knowledge unfortunately breeds pride.

… we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

1 Cointhians 8:1

The kingdom is more than a school of history and doctrines. It is more than acquiring numerous certificates of Bible knowledge. Knowledge without this process of dying will yield nothing.

Have you noticed that some of the most learned and scholarly Bible expositors are very ineffective at real ministry? In fact sometimes, the more scholarly they become the more faithless and godless they are.

A single corn will become a big tree with many fruits only if it falls into the ground and dies.

The Secondary School of Ministry

It is time to send your young men out. It is time to release those

who have been trained into the fields of ministry. The Lord has constantly led me to send my best people out.

One day, a Senior Pastor who had several junior pastors under him asked me; “How can I improve the quality of my pastors?”

I said, “Send them to the “secondary school” of ministry.”

I told him, “Most of the pastors under your care are still in the “primary school” of ministry and they have been there for many years.” “Instead of releasing them into the next stage of ministry, you have kept them with you and that has destroyed them spiritually.”

I explained, “Instead of these ones becoming pastors of hundreds of people, some of them have become guitarists, singers and ushers in your church. They never moved on in ministry.”

I continued talking with this pastor, "it is very difficult to send away people you are used to. It is difficult to send away people you love. You even risk destroying your relationship with them as they may develop a spirit of rejection.”

I explained; “There are pastors who are very honoured and happy to be overseeing thousands of people today. But when I sent them away from me to begin these churches, they were often sad and felt rejected. I had to counsel and affirm my love towards them many times.”

I continued encouraging my friend to send out his best people.

I explained again, “Unless they go through the experience of the dying seed, they will never really bear fruit. They will prance around you and busy themselves with many activities in church, but actually, bear no fruit.”

What are the Processes that a Missionary / Church Planter Will Go through When You Send Him to Plant Churches?

1. The falling process.

Falling into the ground speaks of a period in a man of God's life in

which he is unknown and hidden from the view of the general public. It also speaks of a period of rejection, negative response, refusal, denial and denunciation in his life. Church planters and missionaries will go through this experience many times. Don't worry; isolation, rejection and separation are part of real ministry.

Concerning John the Baptist, the Bible declares that he was hidden in the wilderness until the time of his showing unto Israel. Every pastor must realize that God has a time in his life when he must be hidden. Do not be in a hurry to be exposed since premature exposure leads to destruction.

Jesus Christ was hidden for thirty years before he was exposed to public ministry. His appearance in the ministry surprised those who didn't know that a seed had been in the ground for thirty years.

Moses experienced this falling into the ground. He was utterly rejected by his brethren when he first tried to minister to them. He ended up in the wilderness for forty years. After years of rejection and isolation, he was ready to minister.

Joseph had this same experience of falling into the ground. His visions and dreams were utterly rejected. Then he himself was utterly rejected and dispensed with. He found himself working as a slave and then as a prisoner in Egypt. After several years of separation from his brethren he was finally ready for a great ministry.

These are just a few examples of this pattern of falling into the ground. I tell you, no true minister is truly accepted until he has been rejected.

I've Been There

I have experienced this falling into the ground myself. When I started out in ministry I was utterly and totally rejected by the ministers of my day. One minister that I had a good relationship with refused to minister to our group anymore. When I asked why, he said, “I don't sow amongst thorns anymore.”

He and other pastors claimed that I was not called by God and had

no business starting a church. They felt I was a medical student who should concentrate on his schooling. They told my assistant not to associate with me because it was dangerous to stay with someone who was not called by God.

I told another minister with whom I had a good relationship, that I had started a church. I received an instant rebuke and was questioned as to which Bible school I had attended.

I was discouraged and I went away with my “tail between my legs”. To emphasize the rejection, this pastor decided to hold a campaign right where our church was meeting. He held a big programme and showed a very powerful video of his national and international programmes. It was one of the best presentations of that ministry I had ever seen. Our church looked like a group of lame ducks and dwarfs after this presentation. A powerful invitation was then made to me to join this ministry.

After they had left, I asked myself, “Who would want to be with us when there are such powerful and established ministries in the city?” After that programme, we felt demoralized and discouraged. It was obvious that we were a group of struggling students attempting to do ministry work.

I also remember an incident when I met one of these great pastors of an established church. It was at a wedding being held on the university campus.

I went up to him to say hello and he said, “Oh, hello Dag”

Then he paused, looked at me and said, “Pastor!”

As I stood before him, I felt in my heart that he was mockingly referring to me as a pastor.

I almost asked him “Sir why are you mocking me?” “Why do you call me “pastor” when you don't believe that I am a pastor?”

I don't know how those words never came out of my mouth. Dear friend, I tell you, that the only thing I felt at that time of my ministry was rejection and intimidation.

I went through a period of utter rejection and I continued the ministry work in virtual separation from most of the ministers I had known. God then taught me to minister through lay people. You see, most of the ministries at that time were based on full- time workers.

Don't be worried when you are not accepted or wanted. Don't be upset when no one invites you. Your day of “showing forth” will come! Today, I am accepted and even respected by some of these great pastors who initially despised me. Perhaps they had no choice but to accept me. After all, I am here even if they don't want me.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

Luke 1:80

2. Dying

When the seed falls to the ground, it disintegrates and decomposes. It utterly changes in its character and appearance. By the time God is finished with you, your appearance will be different. Your character will be utterly transformed. Allow the dying process to continue. Except the seed dies, it abides alone. Unless these qualities are allowed to develop, your ministry will not develop.

i. The Development of a Personal Relationship with God

During this period of alienation, many important spiritual traits will be birthed in the man of God. A personal relationship with God is one of the most important things that you will learn when people reject you. Every true minister derives his strength from the Lord directly: You see, many will come in that day and say, “I cast out demons in your name and I did great works in your name”. But the Lord will say, “I never knew you”. This goes to say that every minister must be very particular with his relationship with the Lord. Rejection stops the horizontal (human) relationships and leaves you to develop the vertical (God) relationship.

ii. The Development of Humility

The rejection by man is intended to make you develop humility. Humility is the highest mantle a minister can wear. The more humble a minister, the higher his standing before the Lord! One of the common deceptions in the church is that the larger your church, the higher your standing before the Lord. That is not the case; Jesus made it clear that the greatest pastor will be the most humble and childlike amongst us.

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3

John the Baptist's humility was evident. He made it clear that he was not worthy to unlace the shoes of Jesus. He deferred to the Lord and stated that Jesus must increase as he decreases. How many pastors today want others to increase while they decrease?

He must increase, but I must decrease.

John 3:30

The humility of Jesus was evident. He humbled himself and became obedient even to the death of the cross.

Moses lost all confidence in himself. The Bible calls him the meekest man on Earth. Wouldn't you be meek after forty years in the wilderness as one of the ten most wanted men in Egypt? When you read about the call of Moses, you see how Moses had zero confidence in himself. He was a great person but his opinion of himself was genuinely very low. Notice Moses' own assessment of himself.

The Eleven Complaints of Moses

1. And Moses said unto God, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11).

2. And Moses said unto God, “...What shall I say unto them?” (Exodus 3:13).

3. And Moses answered, “...They will not believe me ...” (Exodus

4:1).

4. And Moses said, “...I am not eloquent... I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue” (Exodus 4:10).

5. And he said, “O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send” (Exodus 4:13).

6. And Moses said, “Lord...Why is it that thou hast sent me?” (Exodus 5:22).

7. And Moses spake, “...the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me” (Exodus 6:12).

8. And Moses said, “...I am of uncircumcised lips” (Exodus 6:30).

9. And Moses cried unto the LORD, “...They be almost ready to stone me” (Exodus 17:4).

10. And Moses said unto the LORD, “Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant?” (Numbers 11:10).

11. And Moses said, “The people are six hundred thousand foot men” (Numbers 11:21).

Joseph after being a prisoner for some years did not think of vengeance when he saw his brothers. He could see through it all that God had meant it for good. Joseph had become so mature in the things of God that he felt his brothers had done nothing wrong. In fact he felt his brothers were used by God.

I've Been There

After going through all that I have been through, I have come to love and appreciate the people who once rejected me. I feel that God used them to train me in the ministry. I bear none of them a grudge and I value their ministries greatly. Even the bitterest of experiences have worked out for my good.

3. Bearing much fruit

Bearing fruit is a very spiritual thing. Most men of God think that if

you have a large church, you have borne much fruit and are pleasing to the Lord.

However you will notice that Jesus was pleasing to His father even before He preached His first sermon.

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED.

Matthew 3:17

You don't have to have a church for the Heavenly Father to say, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.” You don't even have to be a pastor. You don't have to write a book, you don't have to preach a sermon to hear the words, “This my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.”

You don't need to be famous to hear the words, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.” Jesus was not famous when this happened. This Scripture shows us that pleasing God is not based on our work per se. Our fruits are actually gifts that are given by the Lord.

Have you ever wondered at the immense fruit that Christ Jesus bore? Have you ever wondered how thousands of churches have been planted as a result of His three years of ministry? Two thousand years have gone by and He has more fruit than He has ever had. What did He do that brought about so much fruit?

He did six things: just three years of preaching, teaching and healing, living a life of humility, obedience and the sacrifice on the cross. Significant among these things was His sacrifice on the cross as this opened the door for our salvation. Your obedience and sacrifice to the Lord will give rise to many churches.

Spend and be Spent

If you are a senior pastor, don't be afraid to send out the best that you have. God gave His Son and today He has millions of sons. If God has called you to plant a church don't be afraid to die. Unless you die, you will never bear much fruit.

It is time to spend and to be spent for the Lord. Spend your best leaders and workers on the harvest fields of the world. Allow yourself to be spent for Jesus.

This was David Livingstone's philosophy. He allowed himself to be spent so that unsaved tribes and peoples could be discovered and evangelized. I quote from an interview that he had before he died.

David Livingstone: Spend and Be Spent!

At twelve years of age, he showed an anxiety about his spiritual welfare. At twenty he was converted. It was a natural stepping stone from the Christian home to membership in the church.

His folk were worshippers at the Hamilton Church. Two of the elders instructed him in the doctrines. For five months he walked regularly from his home in Blantyre to his little church in Hamilton to be taught by and be prayed with by one of the elders. After this he was duly allowed to become a communicant member.

It was then he made the decision to consecrate himself to the service of Christ in some form of missionary effort.

After graduation in medicine and theology, he applied to the London Missionary Society. Could he come down for an interview? He had no money for his fare. Two friends helped him. The necessary probation period in the London school over, he was ready for his life task.

China was his choice; but the Opium War had closed the door; his heart was turned to Africa, and to that continent he sailed, and landed at Cape Town in 1849.

What did he look like as he set sail? Moderately tall, slim in build; a wiry, closely knit frame suggesting great powers of bodily endurance.

He gave as his reason: "when first I felt the expansive benevolence of the gospel in my heart, it became an interesting question to me; how can I spend the remainder of my days in bringing my fellowmen to the enjoyment of the same happiness and peace?"

How can I spend my years? ..."SPEND AND BE SPENT" the missionary ideal was constant in all his years.

Preaching and teaching, Livingstone was also a physician to the sick. He had a genius for friendship with these Africans.

"Love begets love" was his motto. His hands were never idle; bricklayer, carpenter, stones man and general director of the social economy of his settlements he passed his days in intense action.

The sacrifice of great men like David Livingstone brought about a great expansion of the church into Africa. Truly there is no other way than the sacrificial way laid down by Christ Jesus. The true church is perpetuated by sacrifice!

Chapter 18

Obedience and Church Planting

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

1 Samuel 15:22

We often think that the person who sacrifices is greater than the one who obeys. The word sacrifice brings to us, terrifying images of suffering and loss. Obedience seems to be a much milder and less demanding option. In fact, our human analysis would rate sacrifice above obedience any day.

Once again, God's ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. He makes it clear that “to obey is *better* than to sacrifice”. The word “better” means “Greater, To be preferred, an improved version, superior, Enhanced, more acceptable, more favourable, higher quality, augmented and more desirable!”

This verse therefore means that “it is greater, to be preferred, superior, more acceptable, more favourable and more desirable” to obey than to sacrifice.

Why is obedience to be preferred to sacrifice? When we sacrifice we often know what we are doing and why we are doing it. We know we are going to suffer and we know the reasons for the sufferings. Why is it more desirable, favourable and more acceptable to God when we obey?

The following reasons will explain why obedience is a greater thing compared to sacrifice.

Why Obedience is Better (Greater) than Sacrifice

1. It is greater to obey without fully understanding, than it is to sacrifice.

The greatest blessings in my life and ministry have come from obeying God rather than sacrificing to Him. Most of the time, it is not easy to understand the implications of what you are doing. As I write this book, there are things the Lord has asked me to do that I don't understand.

The reason why we do not understand is because of our level of growth or our stage of maturity in the Lord. I believe that we will never fully understand what God has asked us to do until we begin to do it. Notice this Scripture. It shows us that it is when you do the will of God that you know His will.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

John 7:17

How could I understand the impact of full-time ministry when I was a lay pastor? Many lay people think they understand what full-time ministry is. But I know that they do not appreciate what it is all about. Many lay people think they are serving God just as well as anyone else. It is only in obeying God that I found the importance of full-time ministry.

2. It is better to obey a command that you would not naturally do, than it is to sacrifice.

When the Lord directed me into the healing ministry, I did not fully understand the effect that it would have on my ministry. Until then, I had operated mostly as a teacher and preacher. Naturally speaking I am a more calculating and logical person. It was not natural for me to move by the spirit or minister things that are spiritual. It is one of the most difficult things I have ever done and I am ever grateful for people who helped me cross that barrier. Today I have seen many miracles in the ministry. I can say it is the one thing that has made a great difference in my present ministry.

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

Luke 22:42

It is very unnatural to give yourself to be killed by wicked men. One of the most frightening experiences of mankind is to know that you are going to die. I have had patients who died shortly after being told that they were terminally ill. If you think about it, you would know that it is a terrifying experience.

I remember a lady who had leukemia. She thought she had some kind of fever and was being treated for that. Even though she had a deadly illness she looked and felt quite well. One morning, on a ward round, she asked one of my doctor colleagues where she could get her drugs. My colleague pointed across the road and said, “Oh, you can buy these cancer drugs from the Burkett's tumor department across the road.” The lady was silent! She was shocked! Up until this time, she had not been told that she had cancer or any such illness. This lady was so frightened that her condition deteriorated rapidly. I am sorry to say that within a few hours, this lady went into a coma and died.

The knowledge of approaching death is one of the most terrifying ordeals for any man. Mercifully, God rarely shows us our day of departure.

I always remember the blood shot eyes of a thirty-year-old man who was dying of chronic renal failure on a medical ward. He knew there was something terribly wrong with him. One morning as I attended to him, he gripped my hand and said, “Doctor, please help me. I want to go to Germany. I have a brother there who will help me get medical attention.” I was scared because I was only a medical student, and I didn't know what to do.

I looked downward and saw his urine bag filled with blood and I knew that only God could save him. I always remember the terror in that man's eyes. I remember the sound of his frightened and pleading voice. “Doctor, please help me.”

When I think of my Jesus and how He calmly approached His own gruesome death, I only marvel. When I think of how Jesus prayed for God to take the cup away, I appreciate His obedience to His father.

Dear friend, it is not natural to walk toward your own death. It is

not natural to do things that will hurt and destroy you. To obey is better than to sacrifice!

There are many commands of God that will go against your natural mind or way of thinking. It is time to obey. There are people who give extra offerings to the Lord because they are living in disobedience. These extra sacrifices are intended to compensate for their lives of disobedience. Watch carefully every Sunday and you will see many disobedient Christians paying large amounts to the Lord, hoping that these offerings will close the eyes of Jehovah. Mercy!

3. It is better to obey instructions you do not agree with, than it is to sacrifice.

Disobedience often sets in when you do not agree with the instruction given you. When God instructs us to forgive an obviously rebellious person, we may not readily agree. With time, you discover that forgiveness is greater than revenge. Whenever you are wronged, there is a very self-righteous feeling that makes you want to correct and pay back. It is not easy to ignore this feeling!

Great blessings have come my way as a result of forgiving the people that wronged me. It is not always easy to agree with God's style of doing things.

And it came to pass … that God … said, … Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Genesis 22:1-3

I am sure that Abraham didn't agree with the idea to kill his only son but he did what the Lord asked him to do.

4. It is greater to obey humbling commands, than it is to sacrifice.

Many of God's commands humble us. You could say that the number one characteristic of God's instruction is that they humble you. They often make you look foolish in the eyes of men or in your own eyes.

When the Lord led me to be a full-time minister, I looked foolish in the eyes of other doctors. When I receive offerings or do fund-raising, I look foolish in my own eyes and in the eyes of many people.

I planned to make great sacrifices to the Lord when He called me into full-time ministry. I told Him, I would give large amounts of money from the hospital that I would set up. However, the Lord told me that He did not want my sacrifices, but rather He wanted me to work for Him.

The Compensating Lay Pastor

One day I called one of my lay pastors and asked him to come for a ride with me to Kumasi; a city about 250 kilometers from Accra in Ghana.

“Will you come along” I asked

“It would be a privilege to ride with you,” He said, “I will slip away from work and join you.”

As we drove along, and chatted, I told him something that surprised him.

I said, “You are a very hard working young man.”

I continued; “You are always doing extra things for the Lord.”

You see, this young man was an architect, and in spite of his job, he was constantly working in the church.

I told him; “You run around the city doing anything that needs to be done. You are one of the most sacrificial and dedicated pastors I have ever worked with.”

He smiled gratefully!

I continued; “You have done so many architectural jobs for the church and never charged a penny. Whenever there is any extra pastoral work to be done, it is you I call on”.

I explained; “That is why I called you to come along with me on this trip. I knew you would be able to get away from work at short notice.”

Then I dropped the bombshell, “But you are in disobedience!”

I continued, “You are disobeying God.”

His smile began to fade.

I explained, “The reason why you are so active, so zealous and so sacrificial is because you are trying to compensate for disobeying God. God has called you to serve Him in full-time ministry but you are on the run.”

He was shocked. “I never thought about that,” he said. “It never occurred to me that I was just compensating for my disobedience.”

A few months later, this young man gave up his job and obeyed the call to full-time ministry. May God open our eyes to see if you are disobeying him and trying to compensate!

Oh how we love to compensate for our disobedience! We don't want to humble ourselves before the Lord. We don't want to look foolish before anyone. We want to do our own thing and make a convenient sacrifice to compensate.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Philippians 2:8

5. It is better to obey instructions that don't require your wisdom than it is to sacrifice.

Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor

scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

Matthew 10:9-10

How will I live if I don't provide for myself silver and gold? Walking with the Lord requires that you put aside your own reasoning and trust in His wisdom. To work for God requires faith.

When you see the measly offering baskets with jingling coins, going around from pew to pew, you wonder, “Can I survive on these collections?”

“Is this how God will sustain a full-time pastor?”

Years ago, I visited a church in Europe. The American missionary pastor had a thriving congregation. As I sat in his office, I got to talk about the finances of the ministry.

I told him proudly, “I am not the kind of pastor who depends on offerings.”

I continued, “I work as a doctor and do private business. I don't need anyone's money.”

He looked at me quizzically and said; “I see the wisdom in what you are doing but God's wisdom is higher than yours.”

He explained, “God has a plan and a pattern by which He is building His church. Your plan and your idea will never be superior to His plan.”

God's way is simple! “They that preach the gospel must live off the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14).

He said to me; “You are depriving your congregation of a blessing which they receive when they bless the man of God.”

I self-righteously thought to myself; “I don't need any of those offerings.”

However, after that conversation I began to consider that I could not be wiser than God.

God must know how to build His church better than I do.

Today, I preach the gospel and I live off the gospel. I humbly depend on the method of sustenance that God has designed for pastors. I am not better than any of God's servants. Instead of sacrificing extra time, doing business and other moneymaking deals, I give myself wholly to the money-making ministry of the Word and prayer. It is better to obey than to sacrifice.

6. It takes greater faithfulness and diligence to perform duties that do not appear urgent or important.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:19-20

Pray without ceasing.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Most important things are not urgent. Important things are often unattractive and uninviting. It is difficult to be faithful with what God considers important.

For instance, prayer without ceasing is one of the most important things for us to do. Yet we lack a sense of urgency when it comes to prayer. In times of trouble, you often cannot have faith. While you are in the trouble you will feel like calling on God but fear and anxiety will grip your heart. It is almost impossible to pray under those circumstances. Then you will realize how important it was for you to have prayed.

I have been there in the darkness of life when all theories on faith no longer worked. Have you ever wondered why Jesus did not pray when He was arrested?

It is because He had finished praying before the crisis began.

When Jesus approached the tomb of Lazarus, He wouldn't have said a single prayer before raising him from the dead. He explained that the only reason He was praying was so that those around would know that He had a father.

To preach the gospel and to win the lost is a very important instruction. But often there is no sense of urgency to fulfil that command. The fact that you don't feel any pressure does not mean that it is not important. Pressure does not always signify the importance of a command. It is a great thing to obey the Lord even when we are not under pressure to do so.

7. The consequence of obeying or disobeying one little instruction can be so great that no sacrifice could ever compensate.

Look at the mess we are in because Eve disobeyed the Lord. When the Lord God asked her the question in the Garden of Eden (what is this that thou has done?) He was asking:

What are these wars that you have brought into the world?

What are these sicknesses that you have created?

What is this perversion that you have introduced into the world?

What are these cancers and HIV that you have unleashed on mankind?

Who are these Saddam Hussein, Adolph Hitler and Stalin characters that you have given birth to?

What are all these funerals and deaths that you have released?

What is this fear and self-preservation that is so dominant in the world?

What is this barrenness and pain to women that you have initiated?

What are these hospitals that you have given us a need for?

Who are these handicapped, blind and lame people that you have produced?

Little did Eve know what she was releasing in that one act of disobedience. She could not imagine how much hurt and suffering she was bringing into the world. This is the one thought that keeps me in the ministry. I think about all the people who would perish if I were to disobey God.

Think about Jesus. Think about all the people who were saved through His ministry. By one act of obedience, He has rescued millions from the throes of Hell.

Perhaps if He had stayed on for eighty years, preaching in every country, He wouldn't have had the fruits He has today. There is nothing like obedience in the eyes of God. To obey is better than to sacrifice.

Therefore as BY THE OFFENCE OF ONE judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so BY THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ONE the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Romans 5:18

This is the most important truth you must learn about obedience.

I remember the story of a lieutenant in the army who had received orders to fire his artillery at a certain target, which were some miles away. As they prepared to fire, the radio operator had a message for the lieutenant to hold his fire. He ran to his officer to tell him the new order. Something had changed: the position, which was formally occupied by the enemy, had been taken up by their own troops.

However the lieutenant was so zealous and eager to fight that he did not listen to the radio operator. He was so bent on getting into the battle that he didn't listen. In the story, the radio operator was struck by a bullet as he pleaded with his lieutenant to listen to the new message. But to no avail. He eventually died before he was able to relay the message. The lieutenant finally opened fire and pounded what he thought was the enemy position.

Soon after that, he received word that his own soldiers had suffered many casualties due to the pounding he had given them. It was told

him that he had killed many of his own. This man was later court martialled.

From this story; we see how important it is to obey rather than to sacrifice. The young lieutenant wanted to fight at all cost. But the greater thing to do at that point was to hold his fire and not to get involved. Could it be that there are times that we are just to hold our fire?

God is like the general who sees the whole picture. He knows when to sacrifice and when not to, He knows when to fire and when not to fire. I have learnt that to obey is better than to sacrifice.

God has asked us not to do things that we would have traditionally done. Could it be that there will be times that it is more important not to preach, than it is to preach because that is what God says?

The Apostle Paul said he had been given different commands by the Lord. At times, he had been commanded to be full and at other times, he had been commanded to be hungry. Paul was intent on obeying the Lord. If the instruction was hunger, he was prepared for it; if the instruction was fullness, he would obey!

I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I AM INSTRUCTED BOTH TO BE FULL AND TO BE HUNGRY, both to abound and to suffer need.

Phillippians 4:12

The Disobedience of Saul

Saul was a classic example of one who thought he was wiser than God and could compensate for his disobedience. No sacrifice, no matter how big is acceptable to God if it is done in disobedience. Read the Bible. There are many sacrifices that God is not pleased with. God is not against sacrifice, but He wants your obedience first.

TO WHAT PURPOSE IS THE MULTITUDE OF YOUR SACRIFICES UNTO ME? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of

bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

Isaiah 1:11

The Disobedience of Joshua

Joshua had a clear mandate from the Lord to wipe out all the heathen nations in the Promised Land. It was explained to him that disobeying this command would result in these very nations becoming a snare onto the Israelites.

But if YE WILL NOT DRIVE OUT THE INHABITANTS of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be PRICKS in your eyes, and THORNS in your sides, and shall VEX YOU in the land wherein ye dwell.

Numbers 33:55

However, Joshua left the heathen in three key cities. He obeyed God everywhere except in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod. Read it for yourself.

Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

And at that time came Joshua, and cut off the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities. THERE WAS NONE OF THE ANAKIMS LEFT IN THE LAND OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: ONLY IN GAZA,IN GATH, AND IN ASHDOD, THERE REMAINED.

So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto

Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.

Joshua 11:18-23

It is very interesting to note the three groups of people that Joshua left alive: Gath, Gaza and Ashdod. Each one of these three groups of people gave birth to a significant enemy of the people of God. The Lord foresaw this and that is why he gave that instruction.

Theses cities became the breeding grounds for future enemies. The city of Gath produced Goliath. Delilah who was a thorn in Samson's flesh was from Gaza. The god Dagon, into whose temple the Ark of the Covenant was taken, was in the land of Ashdod. These enemies lived to fight God's people and no one has ever forgotten about these three evil agents. Perhaps, by your disobedience, you are giving birth to future enemies of God. A sacrifice will not prevent the emergence of future enemies. Obedience will.

Goliath of Gath

And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named GOLIATH, OF GATH, whose height was six cubits and a span.

1 Samuel 17:4

Delilah of Gaza

Then went SAMSON TO GAZA, and … loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

Judges 16:1, 4

Dagon of Ashdod

And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Eben-ezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place

again.

1 Samuel 5:1-3

May the Lord save us from our own modern day cities of Gath, Gaza and Ashdod!

Chapter 19

Church Planting and the Priestly Ministry

When pastors become priests, substantial churches are born. Satan's number one ministry is to accuse pastors of evil. He stands before the throne of God and points out our mistakes to us and to the Lord.

This ministry of accusation is so intense that the most appropriate title for the devil today is “the accuser of the brethren”. While this ministry of accusation is going on, the ministry of intercession is carried out by the priests of the Lord. It is only the ministry of the priest that counteracts the effects of the accuser.

The accuser is like a prosecutor. If the prosecutor gets his way, judgment will be meted out. If the priestly ministry doesn't go on, the accuser will succeed.

Seven Things That Every Church Planter Should Know About the Priestly Ministry

1. We are priests unto The Lord

But ye are a chosen generation, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

1 Peter 2:9

And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 1:6

2. The prayers we offer are incense to The Lord.

Let my PRAYER be set forth before thee AS INCENSE; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Psalm 141:2

And the SMOKE OF THE INCENSE, which came with the PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

Revelation 8:4

3. The priest ministers to The Lord and Not for The Lord.

For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices…

Hebrews 8:3

4. There is a need for perpetual incense (unceasing prayer) to be offered unto The Lord.

And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, A PERPETUAL INCENSE before the LORD throughout your generations.

Exodus 30:7-8

5. A priest sins when he does not offer the incense of prayer.

Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should SIN AGAINST THE LORD IN CEASING TO PRAY for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

1 Samuel 12:23

6. The priest is able to save (or cause salvation) by intercession.

Wherefore he is ABLE ALSO TO SAVE them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, SEEING HE EVER LIVETH TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR THEM.

Hebrews 7:25

7. Great miracles happen to the priest as he performs his priestly duty.

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, A CERTAIN PRIEST NAMED ZACHARIAS, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

AND THEY HAD NO CHILD, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

And it came to pass, that while HE EXECUTED THE PRIEST'S OFFICE BEFORE GOD in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, HIS LOT WAS TO BURN INCENSE when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

And THERE APPEARED UNTO HIM AN ANGEL OF THE LORD standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; AND SHE BROUGHT FORTH A SON.

Luke 1:5-23, 57

Chapter 20

How to Plant a Church

Why People Fear to Start Churches

Many people are afraid of starting a church because they do not know how to pioneer new work. The art of beginning a church is the art of witnessing, following-up and gathering sheep together. You do not need to break up someone else's church to begin your own! How would you feel if someone was building his house next to yours and decided to break down your house to get some blocks for his? That is madness!

Unfortunately, this seems to be the only way that some people feel they can start a church. From today, do not be afraid of starting out in an honourable way. If God has really spoken to you, it will succeed!

Count the Cost

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost…

Luke 14:28

Carefully consider the implications of starting a church. It is not going to be easy! Not many people want to identify with a small thing. I learnt many years ago that there are two types of people in the world. There are those who push the canoe from the sand into the sea. Then there are those who jump into the boat when it is safely on the water.

When the canoe is on the sand, it is very difficult to push it into the water. When it is on the water it is safer and many more people jump in. That is why it is easier for a large church to grow.

When I began in the ministry I was despised and opposed! Looking back, I am surprised that I was able to survive the storms of beginning a church on my own. At certain times, I felt like giving

up. Everyone in the world seemed against me. They called me names and ridiculed me.

When I carried a set of drums from my room in the medical hostel to a nearby classroom, I must have looked like a crazy zealot! "What does this person think he is doing with a few medical and nursing students?"

I had no help from any of the bigger churches of my day. Some of them ridiculed me while others even opposed me. There was no help or approval from any man of God.

Do Not Become Desperate

Do not become financially desperate in the early stages of ministry. Be careful not to become dependent on the church you are pioneering for your financial survival. That is a big mistake! If you do, you will become a desperate man, clutching at every straw for survival.

A small church usually cannot afford to pay the salary of a pastor, much less buy him a car. My advice to anyone who is beginning a church is to find a job and start the church as a lay person. When people see that you are not ministering for financial gain, they will be more interested in your new church.

Too many pastors are desperate for more and more offerings from their few members. Sixteen people cannot look after you. Twenty-one people cannot support your upkeep and your children's school fees. Don't be a desperate pastor! Get a job right now! At the right time, the church will have more than enough money to look after its pastors. I had to invest a lot of my own money to get the church to work. Although I am now in full-time ministry, I was not paid for the first five years of the church's existence.

There is another reason why you should not draw a salary in the early stages of a church. Money will be needed to buy equipment and to pay for other expenses like rent. If you siphon out the lifeblood of the church's money, it will not develop normally.

Two or Three is Enough

How many people are needed to start a church? The answer is in the Bible! Two or three!

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matthew 18:20

Some people have criticized me for having two or three people in a church. Well, such criticism comes from an ignoramus. I would rather hear my dogs barking in the morning than to listen to critical and inexperienced scoffers!

I do not start my churches with half a section of another person's church. If I have one pastor who is ready to obey God, all I need to do is to send him and he will start the work. The Lighthouse Cathedral was started with as few as five people.

When I went to Zürich to start a church, I knew only one person. Today that church has several hundred people in it. One pastor who did not know anybody in South Africa, but was willing to do the work of God, started our church in South Africa. You do not need more than one person to start a church. I have churches that have only three people, and I am not ashamed to say it. Do not try to impress anyone; just do the work of God!

Sometimes people are afraid to pioneer a church because they do not know how to do basic Christian tasks. What do I mean by the basics? The basics are praying, witnessing and following up converts.

If you are truly called of God then the only person you need is yourself! All churches which began in this way have grown to become great trees. The Bible says that the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed.

…The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Matthew 13:31, 32

What does that mean? Whereas an Old Boys Association or a Keep Fit Club may begin with quite a number of people, the beginnings of a church are like insignificant seeds. But they can grow, and they will grow. Many of my pastors are surprised when their churches grow. They cannot believe that the church will work. The beginning looks so miserable, yet that is how the kingdom of God is.

The Megachurch Had One Member!

One day, one of my pastors went to church and only one person came. He told me that he was very discouraged and depressed. He led that one person in worship. Then he preached to that one person. Afterwards he took an offering from that one person and then closed the service. He narrated to me how he went back home to his apartment in the deepest and blackest depression of his life. I am happy to tell you that today his church is a Megachurch and is still growing.

Don’t Be in a Hurry

There isn't any tree that grows from a seed into a large tree overnight. No human being grows to be six feet tall in one year. No two-year old grows into an eighteen-year old within six months. If you have a hasty spirit, you will not be successful in starting a church.

He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

Proverbs 28:22

In fact, when you are in a hurry, you are likely to cut corners, break someone else's church and criticize those ahead of you. You will commit dangerous sins in the early days of your fledgling ministry. Do not expect much within a year. Don't be surprised if you only have twenty people after two years. The mustard seed will surely grow into a Megachurch!

Pray for and Recruit Pillars

Pray for labourers. Ask God to give you helpers. Then go out and recruit pillars. Jesus called individuals to follow him. Jesus recruited Simon and Andrew. Then He also recruited James and John.

Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother… And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

Mark 1:16, 17

And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother… And straightway he called them and they left their father… and went after him.

Mark 1:19, 20

These people later became pillars in the church.

And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be PILLARS…

Galatians 2:9

Sometimes you need to travel quite far in order to convince certain important pillars to join your church. Be extra careful that you do not break down somebody else's church in the process of building your own.

Making an open invitation to all is different from coercing people to leave their church to join you. The very existence of a church is an open invitation. Remember that you will reap what you sow (Galatians 6:7). If you pressurize pillars in another person's church to leave, it will happen to you one day.

One important aspect in recruiting people is to pray for labourers. Let it be your daily prayer topic. Ask God for workers and committed people. Pray for people who will be loyal to you in everything that you do. Pray for people who will support you.

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth LABOURERS into his harvest.

Matthew 9:38

Lay a Foundation of Prayer

I recommend an average time of prayer and fasting of three weeks or more. Pray for the future of the church. Do not expect results next week. The answer to these prayers will be seen in the years ahead.

When I first came to Korle-Bu (the area in Accra where our church is located), I would go at ten o'clock every night with four other medical students to the beach to pray. We would pray up until midnight. As I stood on the rocks near the seashore, my prayer was simply, "Lord, let your will be done. Do whatever you want to do with my life." As the years have gone by, the Lord has answered this prayer beyond my wildest imagination.

I believe in laying a solid foundation of prayer and fasting at the beginning of every church. The church is a spiritual entity and not a social club. It must be established on scriptural and spiritual foundations.

Some useful Scriptures in praying for church establishment and church growth are:

…Thy will be done…

Matthew 6:10

Thy kingdom come…

Matthew 6:10

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance…

Psalm 2:8

…enlarge my coast…

1 Chronicles 4:10

…increase them with men like a flock.

Ezekiel 36:37

…for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

Isaiah 66:8

…I travail in birth again…

Galatians 4:19

Be a Motivational Leader

After gathering a few people into a room, you will need to greatly encourage them, including yourself. People will be thinking in their minds, "Are you out of your mind? Is this what you call a church?" You must learn to do what David did when faced with discouragement. Encourage yourself first.

…but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

1 Samuel 30:6

Then you must encourage the people. Tell them that though the beginning seems to be small, the future is going to be great!

Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

Job 8:7

Tell them not to despise the small start. Explain to them that the end is always better than the beginning. When they see that you are encouraged, they will be motivated to continue with the church.

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof…

Ecclesiastes 7:8

For who hath despised the day of small things?…

Zechariah 4:10

Tell them that they are privileged to be founding members of a great church. Explain that the foundation of a building is the most important part of a building. Therefore, they are the most important members that the church will ever have. Tell them that Jesus always had a special place and reward for the apostles because they were his foundational members.

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles…

Ephesians 2:20

Do not make the mistake of rebuking and shouting at them. Do not vent your frustration on your few members. It is not their fault that the church is small in the beginning stages. Preach faith! Preach hope! Preach stabilization! Preach about a better tomorrow! People love to hear that tomorrow will be better than today. You must be bold and shameless in your preaching.

I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity [shamelessness] he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Luke 11:8

In the above passage, the Greek word Anaideia translated importunity, also means shamelessness. The shamelessly persistent person gets results. Let's face it! There is some amount of shame in beginning a ministry with a few people. That is why people despise small beginnings!

Shamelessness (Anaideia) must characterize all that you do when you begin a church. Shamelessly invite people to join you on Sunday morning. When they see that you are not shy of your church, they will be interested in coming. Shamelessly advertise your church.

People will believe what you say about your church. If you have an assistant, he must say good things about the preaching and about the church in general. All of these things help to create a good atmosphere for church growth.

Witnessing and Follow-Up

This must be predominant in all of your church activities. You must boldly enter into the houses of your city and preach Christ to the people. You must shamelessly lead people to Christ in their living rooms. Pray for them and invite them to church.

Stand on the street and talk to passers-by about Jesus Christ. If you cannot shamelessly do street evangelism, then you cannot be a pastor. Lead the congregation in inviting people to church every Sunday. Do not be depressed if most of the visitors do not come back. Most of them will not stay anyway. God will supernaturally bring the increase.

Pastors must realize that there is a spiritual principle of sowing and reaping. Whatever you sow is what you will reap.

…for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

If you sow seeds through invitations and witnessing, you will reap from it one day. My experience is that after a crusade or an outreach we initially have very few results. However, after awhile we begin to have people coming from the very place we did the outreach. Usually they are not the people we witnessed to. But God divinely sends them to us from that place. Use all of the principles of anagkazo (For further study see the book, “Anagkazo” by Bishop Heward-Mills).

Avoid these Mistakes

Do not hurriedly appoint people to leadership positions. Allow time to pass before you make definite appointments. Many of the people who are with you in the beginning will leave anyway. Do not be discouraged because of fluctuating attendance. Do not be discouraged because of a rotational shift of the members, i.e., half attend this week, the other half next week. That is how sheep behave. Take no notice of them!

Do not rent an expensive hall. Do not keep the church's money in

your house or in your personal account. One day somebody will accuse you of stealing, although you may have contributed a lot to the church. Do not count the money yourself but assign people to do so.

You Don't Need These Things

Contrary to what people think, several things are not necessary when starting a church. You do not need a complimentary card or a briefcase to build a Megachurch! A constitution is not vital in the early stages. What is important is to have members and a regular congregation. A church logo is not important, neither is a church flag.

Initially, it may not be necessary to register a church. Many countries allow freedom of association and freedom of religion. Just build the church and fill it with people. Pray for them, preach the Word, visit the sheep and trust God! Since the greater one is in you, you cannot fail!

Chapter 21

Planting a Network of Churches

Every pastor can expect the Lord to use you to plant more than one church. After a period you will have a network of churches. These churches will have to be managed. Managing a network of churches involves training, encouraging and guiding a team of ministers as they work.

Three Keys to Planting a Network of Churches

Key No. 1 - Teaching on How to Do the Work of Ministry

The first key to planting a network of churches is the TRAINING of ministers. The congregation is a field in which you plant seeds. If you plant seeds of leadership and inspire the members to do pastoral work, they will do it. The more you teach on how to do the work of the ministry, the more potential ministers will be released.

When you teach your leaders, you are actually teaching many more people. You are also teaching the followers of this leader. Pastors must know the principle of explosive growth: if you want GROWTH, teach your members, if you want EXPLOSIVE GROWTH, teach your leaders!

Teaching leaders establishes authority over the leaders who work under you. This is because the authority over the leaders is demonstrated by your ability to feed them. Teaching ordinary members is an investment into the church today. Teaching leaders is an investment into the future when you are gone. Success without a successor is failure!

Every pastor must teach leaders because Jesus Christ taught leaders all the time. Pastors must spend more time teaching leaders than teaching ordinary church members. This is the pattern set by Christ Jesus. Teaching leaders is your greatest key to true expansion. You will not have anyone to delegate if you have not trained leaders.

Every pastor must teach his leaders because the leaders will never know what to do unless you teach them. Many pastors assume that the potential leaders around them will acquire vital knowledge by osmosis. People feel that leadership is for special people who are born that way. Osmosis is not the key to leadership - teaching is!

I have written many books on these subjects which I recommend to you: “Lay People and the Ministry[1]”, “The Mega Church”, “Transform Your Pastoral Ministry” etc. As you teach your members these materials, you will be surprised at what they will become.

Key No. 2 - Teaching on Loyalty

The second key to planting a network of churches is LOYALTY. Loyalty is essential for maintaining a network of churches. The churches you will plant will not be in the same location. It is therefore necessary for people to be loyal wherever they are situated. I have taught a lot on loyalty. I have also written two books on this subject “Loyalty and Disloyalty” and “Leaders and Loyalty[2]”. I recommend that you read these books, as they will be a blessing to your ministry.

I once heard of someone criticizing me for teaching on loyalty.

He said, “Why should you teach on loyalty and disloyalty?”

He went on to say that loyalty is not something that is taught but is something that people are inspired to do because of your leadership.

I was not surprised that this dear critic of mine had not planted a single branch of his church but was criticizing someone who had planted over four hundred churches.

On another occasion, a dear pastor criticized me for teaching on loyalty. However when his church split, he became an avid reader of my books and even promoted them to other ministers. Loyalty is a key subject which must be taught until the culture of faithfulness and loyalty is established!

Key No. 3 - Teaching on Church Administration

Church administration involves the managing of the churches that have been created. It involves managing a combination of secular and spiritual issues. It involves balancing natural things with supernatural things.

Church administration involves the blending of hierarchical leadership and a democratic form of government. Both of these styles are biblical. The Bible has examples of committees being formed as in Acts chapter 6. As in the case of Paul and Timothy, the Bible also has examples of an autocratic style of leadership with direct instructions being handed down.

Church administration requires combining the power of God and the wisdom of God. See my book entitled Church Administration.

Without good church administration everything that you build will eventually collapse. You need to master church administration otherwise your ministry will be likened to a rocket that shoots out and falls apart shortly after take off.

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God

1 Corinthians 1:24

The Advantages of a Network of Churches

1. History has proved that the networks of churches or branches are very successful. These networks of churches are sometimes called denominations.

2. There are several well-known networks of churches in the world today. These networks are often the most stable and established congregations everywhere. The Assemblies of God Church, the Church of Pentecost, Church of God in Christ are but a few notable examples of these networks. The largest church in the world, pastored by David Yonggi Cho, belongs to the Assemblies of God Church network.

3. History has shown that belonging to a network of churches can give rise to very large stable congregations. It may be the key to

church growth for your congregation.

4. Belonging to a network of churches sometimes eliminates the instability that characterizes young independent churches. The institutional stagnation that sometimes develops in a network of churches may be much less of an evil compared to the advantages that come with it.

5. In a network of churches, there are tried and tested principles which are passed on to sister churches.

6. In a network of churches, the already existing name serves as publicity and attracts people to the churches. This name becomes like a franchise and serves as a powerful asset. The good name of a network of churches also has spiritual significance that cannot be quantified.

7. In a network of churches, trained members benefit from an established and respected system of pastoral recommendation and appointments.

8. The network of churches can benefit from each other financially. You are not likely to get financial support outside your network. Through a system of brotherly interdependence, churches are able to accomplish much more.

9. Church members readily flow between churches belonging to the same network. The network of churches is therefore to keep members within the fold.

10. Churches within the network easily benefit from anointed senior ministers of that network. They do not have to go through the protocol or experience the cost of having such ministers.

11. Pastors within the network of churches can receive fatherly counsel and encouragement from seniors. Pastors of independent churches are usually suspicious and wary of external ministers who parade as fathers. There is little trust because independent churches often compete with one another rather than support each other.

12.Churches within a network operate under a particular spiritual

covering. The same anointing runs through the entire network because it is really one church.

[1] Now published under the title “What it Means to Become a Shepherd”.

[2] Now published under the title “Those Who are Ignorant”.